FEBRUARY 1916 PRICE 15 CENTS PRICE 15 CENTS

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By Eleanor Mordaunt......811

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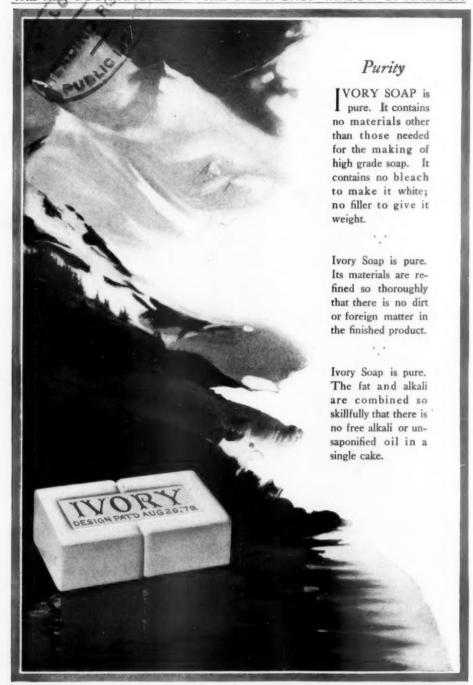






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The State's Witness

A Very Unusual Short Story

Γ was a cool, sunny November afternoon of the sort which, in Briar County, comes at the end of the cottonpicking season. A golden haze-the heritage from hot, dusty days-still hung in the air, but instead of making the breeze breathless, it simply served to screen the glare of the sun and deflect the yellow light in a soft shimmer over the fields. Acre after acre of white, they stretched away; then came a wide band of brown where the tawny stalks, picked bare, showed bronze under the sun; next another strip of the white, unpicked cotton before a second area of brown; and so on and on to the green and red foliage of the forest at the edge of Rexwood plantation.

Two score or more groups of negro men, women and children—working by families—were scattered through the fields, busy with broadening the brown acres as fast as they could pick the lint from the rows still white. In the old days, so much land in cotton, and so many hands to work it, would have established at the top of the slope a great pillared plantation-house with long

double rows of quarters for the negroes behind it; but Rexwood, in the modern manner, supplied its hands with fifty neat, new cabins scattered throughout the fields, each set by itself in the center of the twenty-acre plot which each negro family worked; and the plantation-house at the top of the hill had years yet to aspire to pillars; now it was a white, clapboarded bungalow with screened porches, with a telephone wire running to it and with a windmill, for the water supply, behind.

The girl, who was riding a lively bay pony from this house, epitomized fairly the family's circumstances; she had the fine, soft eyes, and the straight, patrician little features and the graceful bearing of the women of the Rodneys when they were required only to be beautiful and enchanting; but she was tanned on forehead and cheek; her small, slender hands wore gloves which were decidedly shabby; her glance had the alertness of one accustomed to act for herself and used to responsibilities and difficulties. Indeed, Ethel Rodney now was absorbed with some serious matter as she watched a horseman a



By Edwin Balmer

Author of "A Wild Goose Chase," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN NEWTON HOWITT

half-mile ahead of her and making for the forest. He was a tall, thin man on a huge white horse—Walt Kendall, who, with his brother, owned and managed the plantation on the other side of the woods. If he were only crossing Rexwood on his way from town to return to his own plantation, Ethel had no worry about him; but she could not tell that, till he was well in the woods, and so she followed him under the trees. For a quarter of a mile after entering the timber he kept on toward his home; then he swung his horse suddenly and dashed away to the right.

A new team-track entered the road there, cut only a few weeks before when the Yankee lumbermen bought the cypress about the river and put up the mill by Kendall's Bayou; the track stopped at the mill and led nowhere else; so Walt had turned in only to call upon Edgar Douglass, the young Northerner who was in charge there. Ethel urged her pony on faster and followed. As she galloped through the new road and came out in the clearing, she saw that Walt had called, as she had feared, to make trouble.

THE mill-a long, unpainted shed with a shack for the gasoline engine at one end and near the other a manager's cabin, with quarters for the hands a short distance off-stood a hundred yards from the bank of the bayou. A lumber scow lay tied to the bank. Before Walt's arrival, a number of negroes evidently had been busy bearing cypress boards from the mill and loading them on the barge; but Walt had stopped the work by halting his horse across the path between the barge and the mill. Edgar Douglass, in flannel shirt and corduroys, rushed from the mill and ordered Walt away; but the man on the horse ignored the order; he turned to the negroes and threatened them so that they threw down the boards they were carrying.

Edgar cried to them to pick up the boards again. Once more he commanded Kendall to move away. The horseman only lounged more insolently in his saddle—and so Douglass seized the bridle and jerked it. The big horse did not budge, and the rider spat contemptuously at Douglass—who dodged and, crying out something in rage,

tugged harder on the bridle. Kendall's boot suddenly shot from the stirrup, and his spur caught the horse sharply in the belly. The animal leaped, knocking over Douglass and kicking him in the side as he fell.

Ethel cried out and slapped her pony on faster; but Walt Kendall neither heard her nor noticed her approach. He glanced back at the young man whom he had knocked down, and pulling his horse up, he wheeled and bawled a command at the negroes. A few of them started off in the direction he pointed; others stood obstinate; one ignored Kendall entirely and bending over Douglass, started to help him up. Kendall leaped to the ground, snatched up a billet of wood and without warning knocked the negro over the head with it. At that instant Douglass regained his feet. He leaped at Kendall with fists clenched and struck him with all his force on the point of the jaw. Kendall went down on his back and lay quiet.

Ethel cried out in alarm again as she saw this, and as Edgar Douglass turned and observed her, she sprang from her pony and bent over Kendall. The long form of her neighbor lay motionless; his eyes were closed; he seemed not to breathe. She looked up in terror.

"You've killed him, Edgar?"

He gazed down at her dizzily; rage alone had steadied him for the instant and given him strength to rise and deliver his blow; now he was weak, dazed again, but he knelt beside her and put his hand over Kendall's heart. "No, I'm afraid I didn't hit him quite hard enough, Ethel."

A jerk of Walt's arms and a motion. of his hips reassured her at the same time: but her first terror at the thought that Edgar might have killed Kendall altered to scarcely less an alarm now as she saw her neighbor recovering consciousness. She sprang to her feet and seized the Northerner's sleeve.

"Get away from here! Please get away from here-quick!"

"Get away?"

The prostrate figure half sat up. Ethel tried to push Edgar away. "You've struck him-don't you understand? Go away! You've struck him before his negroes in a dispute over them. He'll-he'll-oh, you must have been here long enough now to understand. Quick! Get away-not just to your cabin; go to Rexwood; find my brother; or go to town-anywhere-but start

away now."

"Run away from him?" the Northerner defied. And Kendall was sitting up; so Ethel turned to him and gave him all her attention. He groped, not recognizing her as she bent over him, and he roughly struck her hand as she touched him. She reached into a pocket and pulled out his revolver and threw it into the bayou; a negro, at her command, brought water, and she dashed a cupful into Kendall's face. He gasped and got up. Ethel directed a negro to bring the big white horse.

"Walt Kendall, I've your pistol. You get on that horse and go to your house and stay there!" she cried to him. "It's no use your feeling for your pistol-I have it; and don't you make a move toward Mr. Douglass; don't you say another word to him. You ride on home. You needn't wait for your negroes; I'll send them later. You go right away!"

She stood very small and young before him, but her fair little head was lifted steadily, her lips were without trembling and her eyes glowed defiantly. The tall man glared down at her; but whatever plan he had formed as he regained consciousness seemed to depend upon use of his revolver; without it, he could devise no other adequate action. He blustered a moment, but as the girl again spoke to him, he obeyed her, mounting his horse and riding off. She watched him till he was out of sight; then, her lips suddenly quivering, she turned to young Douglass.

"Please get your horse and come home

with me, wont you?"

Her tone was all appealing; the command-the threat which she had mustered for the moment in which she faced Kendall-was gone. Edgar stared at her, flushing, but he shook his head.

"I can't go home with you to let you

protect me from him."

Her hand went to his arm, and the concern for him-indeed the passionin the quick clasp of her little fingers, astonished him and amazed her no less with its sudden betrayal.

"You must, you must! You don't know him! You don't know us. This isn't as if you were up North and struck a man like him. Come with me, Edgar; please come with me."

Her little face was crimson from brow to cheeks. She was tense, trembling all over. Confusion came to him too with a wild thumping of his heart and a hot leaping of blood through his veins.

"Of course I'll come if you wish it."
She loosed her clasp. "Then please get your horse and come right away.
I'll tell the negroes what to do."

He turned from her obediently and went to his cabin. She gazed after him till he went in; then she looked toward the negroes. Those who had started away at Kendall's direction had halted before leaving the clearing and now had rejoined the others; they were nine men in all, five of whom evidently were roustabouts or casual laborers picked up in town or about the levees and who had been working at the mill for a week or more; but the other four were strange there. Ethel addressed these.

"You four men who were Mr. Kendall's cotton hands all go right back to your cotton picking. The rest of you can keep on loading that lumber."

The roustabouts began with alacrity to pick up the boards which they had dropped; three of the cotton hands moved off obediently; the fourth delayed. He was a young negro, very black, with a bolder bearing than the others; he was the one who had tried to help Douglass and whom Kendall had knocked over the head for it. He was bleeding above the ear from the blow, and there were welts on his face. Ethel recognized him as Sam Dawe, a hand with whom Walt Kendall had had trouble before.

"You go back to your cotton too!" she directed him firmly. "Don't stay here and don't try to run away. The best thing you can do is to go back and clean up your cotton. If you're in trouble again, go to see Mr. Rodney; don't come back here."

The negro moved off after the others. Ethel watched the man uncertainly; in his case, she was not entirely satisfied with the direction she had given, but she could think of nothing better.

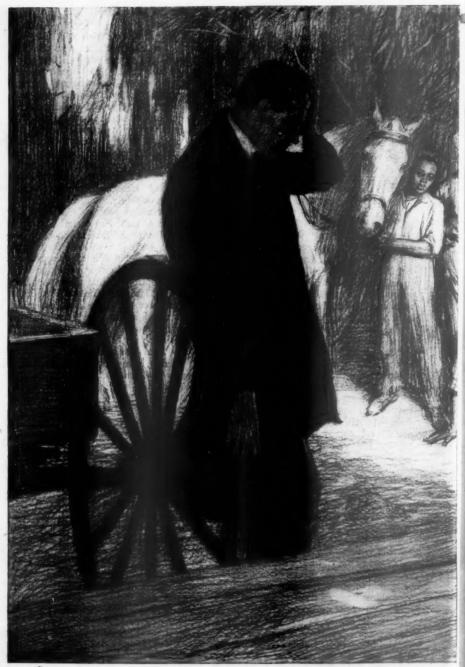
Edgar came from his cabin. He had changed from the corduroys to the blue serge which he wore when calling upon her at Rexwood. His dizziness was gone, but he could not entirely conceal a limp as he walked. His face was pale from pain. He was able to mount his horse, however, and follow her through the timber to the plantation road. When they could ride side by side, she guided her pony close and watched him anxiously, ready to steady him if he tottered in the saddle. He observed this and pulled himself up straight and smiled reassuringly.

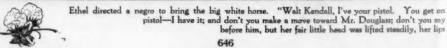
"I've troubled you again, haven't I?"
"Troubled me!" she exclaimed.

Her display of loving concern for him, when she had found him threatened, had amazed her a few minutes before; but already it had come to seem scarcely strange at all. She had never seen him or heard of him till he came to Briar County three weeks before; but those weeks had quickly brought them into friendship.

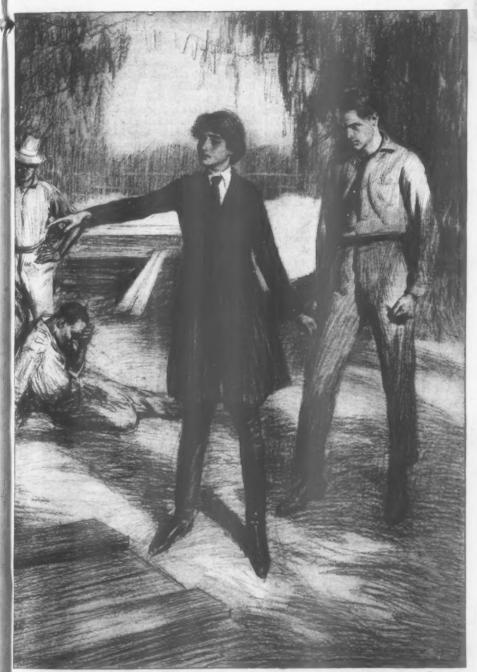
ALL that western end of Brian County, bounded on two sides by the river, was as new as Rexwood, not only to cotton, but to any crop. Up to the time of the War it mostly was a morass in wet weather, full of sloughs crossed only in searches for runaway slaves; for decades afterwards it had remained a wilderness of cypress and water oaks bounded by canebrakes to which planters came with their dogs to hunt bear and shoot waterfowl. Then came years of high prices for cotton, with the boll weevil consuming crops down the river. Jim Rodney abandoned his father's place on the highlands and bought in the swamps, bringing his cotton hands to build up the levees to hold back high water. He had them drain, clear the land and plant. From the heavy, inky loam, stalks shot up high as a man's shoulder and whitened early with great blobs of lint which the weevils did not destroy.

So Jim settled, built the bungalow for his wife Madge, and his sister. But others like the Rodneys were slow to come. Those who planted the neighboring new-made land were the sons of woodsmen and poor whites who had had





that



that horse and go to your house and stay there!" she cried to him. "It's no use your feeling for your another word to him. You ride on home." She stood very small and young were without trembling and her eyes glowed defiantly.

say



some sort of titles to the vanished swamps. Hired overseers and "riders" from distant counties came, made payment on a few hundred acres and brought from here and there and everywhere negroes to work their land. There were others who had neither possessed

acre nor employed negro before.

Among these neighbors Jim found few enough for his own acquaintance, fewer to be entertained at his home by his wife and his sister. Thus Edgar Douglass, who came in October, was made more than welcome at Rexwood. He was a nephew of an official of the Chicago lumber concern which owned the mill, and letters from a Rodney cousin in Chicago commended him. He proved a well-looking, impulsive, likably hottempered and heedless boy of twentytwo. Ethel and he made friends at once, but from the first his notions about negroes caused her anxiety. He had not been in the neighborhood a week before he had his first "run in" with the Kendalls over their ways of managing their hands, and recently his encounters with Walt, particularly, had become more and more perilous. The become more and more perilous. sudden discovery of what it would have meant to her if Edgar had been badly injured was what dismayed Ethel now and caused her to keep as close to him as she could.

"How did this start?" she appealed.
"You took the part of his hands again?"

"That was it. You see, I'd told some of them that the next time he got after them in his usual way—he keeps a wagon-spoke about, you know, to knock them over the head with when he goes for them—to come to me and I'd look out for them. Four men came to me this morning; I kept them and gave them work."

"I heard that was it," Ethel replied. "So when I saw that Walt was going down to see you, I came after him. You see—you see," she tried to explain to her companion as gently as she might, "what you did to-day was worse—I mean it was more dangerous—than anything you've tried to do before. When you merely rode over to the Kendalls' plantation and tried to interfere with Walt there, you didn't do anything against the law or anything which Walt

could use to stir up the neighborhood against you. You just made him hate you and made yourself unpopular with all his sort. But what you did to-day was different."

"How was it different?"

"You know our law down here: when a planter furnishes a negro a cabin and issues him rations to keep him while he is working the crop, the law binds the negro to work for the planter till the debt is paid—that means till the crop is in. So those four hands who ran away from the Kendall place were breaking the law; and when you put them to work for you, you broke the law too, and you did the worst thing to turn

everyone against you."

He caught the rebuke in her tone and turned to her with quick color. "One of those men who came to me this morning had been beaten last night till he-excuse me, please," he put in hastily as her face went white. "I remember you told me you found on the road once a negro who had been punished by an expert; you got the fellow help, didn't you?-and then you fainted. Well, one of those men was like that. He said that Walt Kendall said he was insolent. Should I have sent that man back to be killed if Kendall got in a rage again? He's already killed a negro for insolence, I hear, and nothing's ever been done about it."

Ethel's face suffused and then was pale again. "I sent him back, Edgar, after you had gone to your cabin."

He stared at her. "So that's what you did."

She rode close to him quickly, and her fingers touched his sleeve. "It was the best thing to do. If I had not sent him back, Walt would have got him back anyway a little later, and it would only be worse for everyone."

He made no reply but pulled up his

horse.

"Look at me, Edgar," she appealed as he started to turn back. "Do you suppose Jim or I like the things Walt Kendall does, any better than you like them?"

"Then why don't you do something about it?"

She faced him, very quietly. "For the same weak reason, I reckon, that when

one of your Walt Kendalls up North shuts up sixty or a hundred sewing girls in a firetrap loft and they burn to death, none of you make it a business to punish him; for the same reason that, when one of your Walt Kendalls hires men who shoot down miners on strike and kill their wives and children, none of you take it upon yourselves personally to call him to account. Oh Edgar, don't misunderstand me. I'm not defending Walt Kendall; I'm just saying that there're men like that in every section, and their neighbors leave them mostly alone. It doesn't give you any more right to punish Walt Kendall because it's negroes instead of white people he's abusing; it gives you a lot less right-from Walt's point of view. Oh-oh, I like you for wanting to do something to him, Edgar; for I want to too! I know Jim does! But if we can't interfere between a neighbor and his hands, do you think you can? You don't understand what you're doing when you take the side of black against white down here! Please, please, don't give the Kendalls any more grievance against you, or no one can tell what will come of it!"

He sat still on his horse; Ethel clung to his sleeve, and as she felt him draw from her, she did not try at all to conceal the intensity of her feeling for him.

"Do you mean you sent those negroes back to Kendall for the sake of keeping me out of trouble with him?"

"Yes—because you couldn't help them and were only putting yourself in Walt's power!"

SHE started her pony on and caught his bridle to prevent him from turning around; but as she brought him on with her to Rexwood, she knew that she had not made him agree with her; he was yielding to her only while he was deciding for himself what he should do. She had hoped she would find Jim at home when they got there, but he and Madge both were still away, and so Ethel persuaded Douglass to lie down on the lounge on the porch, and she set herself to entertain him to take his thoughts away from the events of the afternoon; but every few minutes, whether they were talking together or she was reading to him, he lifted his

head and gazed uneasily across the cotton fields to the woods beyond which lay the Kendalls' place. Unwillingly she left him at last to go to dress for supper.

She had just reached her room and begun to undress when the telephone bell in the hall rang the signal for Rexwood. The sound unreasonably alarmed her, and she snatched up a robe to answer the call before she realized how senseless was her fright. The call was from Jim; he merely wished to tell her that he and Madge would not be home for supper, and he asked Ethel to give him some figures from a memorandum in a drawer of his desk upon which the telephone stood. He kept a revolver in that drawer, and so it was locked. She got the key and opened it, pushed the revolver back in the drawer, found the memorandum and read it to Jim. Then she rang off and returned to her room.

She had barely laid off her robe when the telephone rang again. She did not go out to the hall this time but waited at her door till she heard Douglass answer. The call appeared to be for him, and so she closed the door and moved to her dressing table. After a minute she heard Fdgar's voice raised in excitement.

She hurried into her white dress and returned to the hall. He was gone from the telephone. As she went out to the front of the house to find him, she heard the sound of a horse galloping from the stables. She ran to a window and saw that Edgar was the rider and that he was urging the horse madly in the direction of Kendall's woods.

She screamed after him through the window, but he did not hear; she ran back through the hall, calling for the servants. The houseboy had heard Mr. Douglass speaking over the 'phone; some negro had called him, and Mr. Douglass had got very excited and had run to the stables and saddled his horse himself and got on and galloped away. Yes, something was said about Mr. Kendall; the houseboy heard Mr. Douglass say his name loudly and angrily.

Ethel told the boy to run and bring her horse. While she waited, her glance caught the drawer which she had opened in Jim's desk. The drawer was still standing open, but the revolver, which had lair on top of the other things in it, was missing. She pulled the drawer farther out and searched all through it.

The revolver was gone!

The boy brought her pony before the house; she leaped to the saddle as she was, in white dress and slippers, and raced down the road.

THE sun had set a few minutes earlier behind the trees about the bayou, but the blood-red rays lighted the clouds, and the haze which hung in the still air was yellow and orange with the afterglow. Dust thickened this haze over the road to the bayou-the dust which had not yet settled after Edgar Douglass had galloped his horse down that road. In front of Rexwood plantation-house, the rows of cotton stretched for almost a mile with only the scattered cabins of the negroes to obstruct the view; so Edgar was still in sight when Ethel started. Before he vanished between the trees, she was sure of his direction; he was riding, not back toward the mill, but to the other end of the bayou to the Kendalls' plantation. She dashed after him from the golden glow of the open fields into the twilight under the trees.

Ethel had passed no one on the plantation roads but a few of her brother's cotton-pickers; there was no one on the road through the woods but herself and the boy she was pursuing. She had not gained upon him when he was in the open; but now, though the trees hid him, she had the sense that she was overtaking him. She urged her pony on faster; it was more than two miles through the timber to Kendall's place, and so she

had a chance to catch him.

She shouted now and then, in the hope that something might have delayed him so that he would be just beyond the next bend. She tried to make out some reply, or some sound other than the noise of her pony's hoofs; but the woods were all silent, till suddenly from far ahead came back the sound of a shot—another shot—now two more. How far away the sounds were she did not know; but she was still in the woods and she had not seen or heard anyone, when her pony scurried to one side to avoid something lying in the dust. Pulling up short, she flung herself from the saddle.

The form beside the road was in a heap. It was so dark that it seemed to Ethel that the clothing was blue, and she shut her eyes and groped weakly as she knelt beside the still figure. She caught the cloth between her fingers. As she felt its texture, she cried out and opened her eyes and dared to bend closer. It was not the boy in the blue serge-it was not the boy whom she had determined to protect-who lay there heaped up in the road; it was Walt Kendall! The sticky spots which stained her fingers were his blood; he had been shot through the chest once-twice; there were two big blotches on the front of his shirt. She had no need to lean closer to know that he was dead, but she forced herself to do so and make certain. As she arose, the horror of the deed there seized her. Edgar Douglass had not been killed-but he had killed!

ETHEL reminded herself that Douglass must have fired in self-defense. She knew Walt Kendall, and she knew that even before the last outrage—the outrage which must have been told to Douglass over the telephone—Kendall deserved little mercy; but still—to kill him!

It was because Edgar Douglass had put from him—or appeared to put from him—such deeds as this, even in self-defense, that she had come to love him. Yes; now that she recoiled from his act, she knew that she had loved him. He had scorned to carry a revolver, even after he knew he had made enemies; he had said he would rather be shot himself than to take it upon himself to kill another. Now she knew that, even while she had told him he must protect himself, she had loved him for his different code from that of the other men about her.

Yet Douglass had shot and killed—in self-defense, surely, or perhaps in defense of another; she must remember that! But even as she was repeating this to herself, her eyes were denying the assurance. She saw no sign in the posture in which Walt Kendall had fallen that he had offered attack; he held no weapon in his hand. He had got another revolver to replace the one she had taken from him by the bayou,

but it was still in his pocket. It was all loaded; it had not been fired at all.

The four shots which she had heard all had come from another revolver, which she found after a minute lying a few yards down the road. She picked it up and recognized it; the revolver Jim kept in the drawer, the one she had missed after Douglass had rushed from her house.

She "broke" the revolver and found four of the cartridges fired, the other two whole.... She was holding the revolver and cartridges when Luke Kendall and two other men ran up from Kendall's plantation, and finding her there, made her witness before them of what she had seen and of who must have murdered Walt Kendall.

A POSSE arrested Edgar Douglass fifteen minutes later at the mill down by the bayou. When they found him, he was violently excited, but he denied knowing of Walt Kendall's death and he denied having gone down the road toward Kendall's place. He claimed that when he was at Rexwood, one of the mill hands had telephoned to him that Sam Dawe had come back to the mill and that Walt Kendall, following him, had caught Dawe and knocked him unconscious.

Douglass explained his excitement by having been told that, and by his coming to the mill and finding Dawe dead.

That night Luke Kendall went about stirring up his friends to take the prisoner from the local lockup and hang him; but Jim Rodney arrived home in time to prevent, and to get Douglass on a train under guard to the strong jail at Harrow, forty miles away. Jim succeeded in doing this by pledging that his sister would give sufficient evidence to convict Edgar Douglass at the trial.

Immediately after Edgar's arrest, newspapers throughout the State published extravagant commendations of Walt Kendall as a citizen, and distorted the facts of Douglass' attempts to stop Walt's abuse of negroes. They laid to his influence every recent instance of insolence or insubordination on the part of a negro.

Edgar's friends in the North only made matters worse by bringing to his defense the highest priced lawyers who could be hired. They assailed Kendall's memory and the character of his friends as savagely and as unfairly as Douglass was attacked. They turned the trial into a factional fight which filled the town of Harrow with sensation seekers shouting that Edgar Douglass must be hanged or no one could keep the negroes in their place. And all this went on while the twelve men who were to decide Edgar's fate were being selected.

In January came the trial itself—the morning when Jim knocked at Ethel's door just at dawn and called to her gently that she must get up at once so he could motor her to Harrow to avoid the crowds which planned to meet her at the station and give her an ovation as the chief witness against the prisoner. She drove with Jim through the chill January morning. She was not recognized until she entered the courtroom, where everyone rose to stare at her, and men cheered and women applauded.

The prosecuting attorney ushered her with much ceremony to the witnessstand, and very white and tense, she raised her hand and was sworn. She sat down then, and as she gazed before her, she saw the boy on trial-his white face, and his blue eyes wide and wondering as he stared at her; and she choked and gasped and clutched at the side of her chair while the prosecuting attorney requested the indulgence of the court for the fair daughter of the State confronted with so distressing a duty. Then some one brought her water and told her to look away from the prisoner. She did look away, and as some one began asking her questions, she answered.

Queer questions they were, because they were put in such a way that she had but one answer for each, and yet they did not let her tell the truth. For instance:

"In the first encounters between the defendant and Walter Kendall, Douglass was the aggressor?"

"Yes."

"Kendall did not interfere with Douglass until after Douglass had invaded Kendall's plantation several times and tried to dictate Kendall's treatment of his hands?"

"Yes."





The prosecuting attorney requested the indulgence of the court for the fair daughter of the State confronted with so distressing a duty. Then some one brought her water and told her to look away from the prisoner. She did look away, and as some one began asking her questions, she answered.

"In fact, Kendall did not visit the mill until Douglass had enticed Kendall's hands there and set them to work?"

"No."

"Upon that occasion, did not Kendall confine himself to stopping the work of the negroes there?"

"Yes."

"There was no personal encounter until Douglass sprang at Kendall's horse?"

"None."

"Even then, Kendall made no attack; Douglass was knocked over by the horse?"

"Yes."

"While Douglass assaulted Kendall so violently as to knock him unconscious?"

"Yes."

"Yet after Kendall came to, he offered no violence; you yourself disarmed Kendall in anticipation of his offering violence, but as a matter of fact he made no attack?"

"None."

"When requested to leave after that, he dril so?"

"Yes."

All this, Ethel knew, gave an impression opposite to the truth; but after all, those replies were not vital. The essential questions and answers were:

"After you took Douglass with you to Rexwood and had replied to the first telephone call, you opened the drawer of the desk in the hall and saw there your brother's revolver?"

"Yes."

"You left it there?"

"Yes."

"How much later was the second telephone call?"

"It came almost immediately."

"And Douglass answered that call?" "Yes."

"So he went to the desk where you left open the drawer with the revolver?" "Yes."

"His tone in speaking at the telephone alarmed you?"

"Yes."

"So you ran into the hall as quickly as you could?"

"As soon as I could get my dress on yes." "He was then gone from the desk?"

"Yes."

"You examined the desk drawer and ascertained that the revolver was gone?"

"Yes."

"That alarmed you?"

"Yes."

"So when you saw him galloping off, you immediately sent for your horse and followed him?"

"Yes."

"No one but Douglass left the house before you?"

"No one."

"No one passed you on the way to the place where you found Walter Kendall's body?"

"No one."

"And there you found the revolver which immediately before, you had seen in the drawer at Rexwood?"

"Yes."

AT least those last replies—those which convicted the man she had loved—were wholly true; in answering, Ethel had stated only inescapable fact; of that she might feel sure. And from that she took what reassurance she could upon the day in February which the judge had set for Edgar's execution. He would not be executed this day, for his lawyers had succeeded in showing errors in the conduct of the trial which won a new hearing; but, at best, that meant only delay.

During the last week, everything had turned for the worst. Northern newspapers had reached Briar County accusing the court of prejudice and persecution, and proclaiming, for black as well as white to read, that if Edgar Douglass was guilty, a decent community would thank him for ridding it of such as Walt Kendall.

The next day—evidently as a result—negroes set upon an overseer at the eastern edge of the county and all but killed him; the negroes, though pursued, escaped; and now upon the noon of the day upon which Edgar was to have been hanged, but for the clever-

ness of his lawyers, another white man was attacked by blacks. The negroes ran for the wods about the river, and at evening the pursuers reached the timber about Kendall's Bayou, and with torches

and lanterns they beat through the wood. Ethel stood watching anxiously from the veranda of Rexwood. Though it was midwinter now, the night was only cool; the air was bracing and clear, with the stars bright in a moonless sky. Usually, at this hour of the early evening, the black expanse of the cotton fields was dotted with the glows from cabin windows. But to-night everything was dark except the torches flickering between the trees, and there was no smell of wood-smoke on the breeze which came up over the fields; for the

negroes had covered their fires in terror

and lay hiding in their cabins. But Ethel knew that if the men beating the woods were again cheated of the prey they hunted, they would not turn upon other blacks; this night they would go to Harrow to take Edgar. She had heard their exclamations as they came through the plantation. "Douglass is to blame for this. Douglass has got to hang or there'll be no safety for any white man in the county.... Douglass put 'em up to this!" And Ethel knew they believed it! It was the night of the day upon which he had been sentenced to be hanged, the day upon which a

The girl stepped down upon the ground and advanced in the dark in front of the house the better to watch the lights in the wood: they still moved separately and far apart as in the search, but now-now what was that? They were gathering. Had they found one of the blacks they hunted? She ran forward, bareheaded and in house-dress and slippers.

No; it was not that; the lights did not act as if those who held them had accomplished their purpose; they were together, but some of the lights were going out. They were moving down the road now - down the road upon which she had ridden after Edgar and upon which she had found Walt Kendall dead.

She ran after them. The little lights the lanterns and the torches-were almost all gone, but in the place of their

yellow flicker a great pink glow swiftly brightened and burned red over the trees toward the bayou. Something was afire there-not the trees; they would not flare up and blaze like that all in one spot. No, a building had been fired -the mill where Edgar had worked.

"Fire!" Ethel cried the alarm. "Fire!" She shouted it to the gray blurr of a negro cabin back from the road. No one answered. She cried it to a horseman, and now to four men in a motor-car which dashed toward her; but they were rushing from the fire, looking back at it!

Other men went past-men with rifles who turned aside into the fields and passed a dozen yards away as they saw her white figure, armed men in motor-cars which swept swiftly past and left her choking in the dust.

They were all moving in concert in one direction-east toward the road which led to Har-

row. Behind

them the blaze



incredulous start, she reached her hand for it

a revolver! Jim's revolver!

and stained the sky with a great bloody glare which silhouetted figures of more men running through the fields.

"To Harrow—to Harrow and hang him!" she heard the echo of a voice. "To Harrow and hang him!" replied a louder, more reckless shout. "Harrow and hang him!" the cry seemed to stay over the fields.

THE girl screamed something in reply and flew up the road toward Rexwood. "Jim! Jim!" she cried. He had been with the men making the search, but he would not be with the mob in this. "Jim!"

She heard him calling her name in reply, and now he was with her. "Where have you been, Ethel? What have you been doing out here? Go into the house and stay there!"

She seized her brother. "They are going to Harrow! I heard them. They are going to Harrow!"

"Go into the house and stay there!" Jim repeated. She fought him uselessly; he dragged her. As she faced him in the light, she knew that the horror of what was on foot that night had come to him too, and he knew the hopelessness of trying to prevent it. "Stay here, now," -he thrust her into the hall,-"and I'll see what I can do. You telephonetelephone Grimesby and Stafford. Telephone Whitney and Stearns!" He named to her the men in Harrow upon whom they might possibly count for what stand would be made against the mob streaming to the jail. "Tell them twenty men or more, in at least five machines, are leaving here to take Douglass from the jail and lynch him. It's no use to call Sparston," - Ethel knew him as the warden of the jail,-"for everything is fixed with him. Luke Kendall just came back from Harrow. Sparston will only make a bluff at putting up a fight and then let them in; he knows they're coming. So just call Grimesby and the rest. I'm going to see what I can do to hold some back at this end."

He pushed her toward the telephone and rushed from the house. Calling even to the four men whom Jim had named was useless, she knew, as useless as Jim's trying to stop any of the mob here now. None of the four would shoot men who

might be their friends, for the sake of saving a murderer for a legal hanging a few weeks later; Jim himself would not do that. They would plead and argue; that was all. Yet a call to them was the only thing she could do. She snatched up the telephone instrument from the desk in the hall and lifted the receiver to make the call; no one answered. She signaled again and again but received no response; and now, as she held the receiver to her ear, she knew that the wire was dead; there was no noise at all upon it.

THE wire went into the wall just back of the hall desk, and some months before, when the telephone thus was dead, she had found the wire pulled from the connection near the floor. She called for a houseboy and one of the maids to move the heavy desk. As they lifted it and shoved it away, she knelt to examine the connection. The wire was still at the wall, all right; but as she stooped, something else caught her eye. With a wild, incredulous start, she reached her hand for it—a revolver! Jim's revolver! Jim's old revolver lying on the floor under the desk!

The girl screamed as she held the revolver in her hand under the light and knew it beyond any question. It was the revolver which had been in the drawer the moment before Edgar Douglass left the house two months ago, the revolver which had been missing when she went to the desk a minute later, the revolver which she had sworn was the one near Walt Kendall's body and which must have been used to kill him!

But this could not be that! It could not be the one which was in the road. The State's attorney kept that; he guarded that as the chief evidence for the second trial. This could not possibly be the one which had been in the road. But it was the one which had been in the drawer! This was Jim's revolver! She screamed again as it crashed to her now what that must mean.

Edgar had not taken the revolver from the desk at all. He had not shot Walt with it. So her evidence which had convicted him—the essential, vital, inescapable fact which she had sworn to and which had condemned him—was

false! Another revolver like Jim's had been used to shoot Walt Kendall; some one else must have used it; some one else must have killed Walt that night!

And now that she knew it, she saw in a flash how it could be. She jerked open the drawer in which, that evening two months ago, the revolver had lain, and she felt the back of it. There was room between the back of the drawer and the top of the desk for a revolver to be pushed; when she had felt in the drawer, she must have pushed it over the back of the drawer so that it slipped between the backs of the row of drawers and the back of the desk; so it had lain there on the floor under the desk all the time. No one had searched for it there. She had missed the weapon from the drawer and then found it in the road,or had been sure that she had, -and so no one had moved the desk and found it until now; and at this moment, because of what she had sworn, Luke Kendall was leading men in motors to Harrow to take Edgar from the jailwhere everything was arranged with the guards-and hang him!

Ethel hugged the revolver to her and tried the telephone again. And now she knew what was the matter with the instrument: the men on the way to Harrow had cut the wires along the road so that no warning could be sent ahead. Hysterically she cried to Madge what she had found; and now, with the terrible necessity to act,—to act at any cost, at any risk to herself, to save the boy about to be put to death because of

her,—her mind was clear.

It was half past nine o'clock; there was no train which could take her to Harrow that night; Jim had taken the automobile, and a horse now was useless; but in the barn was a motorcycle which Harris—the overseer who was at Rexwood in the crop season—used for errands to and from town. When it first came, she had made Jim teach her the mechanism, though she had never ridden it more than a mile or two; but she could ride it this night.

It had been ten minutes after nine when Jim brought her back to the house; the way the hands stood on the clock in the hall was distinct in her mind now; that meant that the men on

the way to take Edgar from the jail and hang him must have half an hour's start; they must be twelve or fifteen miles on their forty-mile way to Harrow; but they could not drive much faster than Jim had driven with her the morning she went to court to give evidence. That morning, she and Jim had been on the road for two hours; so if now she might reach Harrow in an hour and a half, she might catch them. Surely she could do that.

She cried to the houseboy to go to the barn and get the cycle ready; he was accustomed to cleaning it, putting in gasoline. She ran to her room, pulled off her skirts and got into her riding knickerbockers and jacket. Thrusting the revolver inside her waist, she buttoned the jacket over it as she ran to

the barn.

The houseboy had filled the gasoline tank and lighted the head lamp; she took her place in the seat and spun the pedals. The motor roared and the rear wheel whirled; it came to the ground, and with a gasp she threw herself forward upon the handles and held the machine straight as it shot from the barn and down the road toward Harrow.

She pulled the throttle lever andheld on. She knew by the open fields on both sides that she had not yet passed from Rexwood; now a tunnel under trees, which made the motor explosions twice as loud, told that she had reached Baghot's woods; another open space and a second black, echoing passage between trees, and she had passed Clay's plantation; then open space and trees, open space and trees; she no longer knew the names of the plantations or of the woods, but a bridge over a watercourse, which she leaped across with a clatter of planking, followed by a swing to the right and a sharper, more terrible turn to the left, told her that the gray, twisting, writhing ribbon of ruts and dust and stones ever rushing at her into the glare of her headlight and sweeping under her wheels and whirling, whirling her on, was the road to Harrow.

Lights ahead on both sides ci the road flickered to her that she was approaching the crossroads settlement of Fillan, six miles from Rexwood; the road there was empty, as it had been ever since she had left Rexwood; she was past the lights and into the blackness of open fields again. She went on, decreasing speed only for the more dangerous turns; and now, as she looked for lights ahead which would tell her that she was nearing the village of Salsby, only gray, darkened dwellings showed themselves beside her.

This meant that she had gone five miles farther, that she was more than one-fourth the way to Harrow; but how much time had she taken to run those eleven miles? A chill of terror struck through her as the boom of a bell sounded from one of the gray blurs beside her. Boom! the second beat followed after her. Boom! resounded the third before all other noises were lost again in the clatter of her motor. It was the bell in the clock tower of Salsby, and it was striking ten o'clock! It had been only a few minutes after the half hour when she left the hall of Rexwood. Had she delayed in the barn longer than she supposed, or had she been riding too slowly-eleven miles, out of forty, in twenty-five minutes?

She tugged wildly at the throttle as she reckoned what that meant. Luke Kendall and the men he led would reach the jail in another hour, and she, at eleven o'clock, would be five miles away. Why? Because she was a coward, because she had been sparing herself, slowing at the turns to save her neck though she let Edgar-whom she had sentenced-die. She could open the throttle no wider now, but she could leave it open in going around turns. One was ahead of her now; her hand by instinct started to shut off the gas, and her legs strained back on the brakes, but with a gasp of self-contempt, she loosed the brake and let the motorcycle

She got around that turn and the next without slowing, and she seemed also to go faster on the straight road. She passed village after village all dark; she had no way of knowing the time. The road still was empty; she passed no one going in either direction; but nowshe was many minutes beyond the bridge which she had marked in her mind as halfway to Harrow-she saw dust-beams swirling in the glare of her lamp. They

were thick enough to make certain that some one, also speeding toward Harrow, was close ahead. She knew that the amount of dust could not come from one car: she must be overtaking the five

cars led by Luke Kendall!

The blood beating in her throat almost choked the girl as she knew this. She could not see the cars, but that must be because they bore no lights; in another minute or two she must be upon them. She snatched one hand from the handlebars and clapped it to her breast to feel for the revolver buttoned under her jacket; it was there! But now her powerlessness to stop those men and turn them back came to her for the first

When she had found the revolver at Rexwood and realized that everything to which she had sworn was false, in that overwhelming moment it had seemed that she had but to overtake the men on the way to hang Edgar and show them the revolver and tell them how she found it; then they must know too that he was innocent; then they would turn back or go forward with her only to proclaim him free. During the pursuit she had been able to think of nothing else; but as she ran through dust so thick that it half suffocated her and began to see the dark blur of the cars ahead, she was aghast with realization. Those men just ahead were the same who had fired the mill two hours before - infuriated, wrought to frenzy, almost beside themselves with rage. She thought of them as she had seen them starting on this ride to Harrow. Suppose she had the revolver then and had rushed into the road to show it to them as proof that Edgar was innocent-could she have made them believe her? And now after they had excited themselves still more and must have sworn to stand together to go through with this duty,-that was what they believed it to be, a duty for the safety and security of life in the county,-could she stop them and turn them back simply with her story? No; Luke Kendall knew that she hated him; he knew that she had cared for Edgar; he would be sure it was a trick of hers to balk him.

Her headlight caught the back of a motor-car and showed her three men on



the rear seat-three men with blotches of white cloth, with black eye-holes, under their hats as thev turned and looked back at her. They shouted to her uglily as she came up, and leveled rifles at her. The sight of them banished any possible doubt of what they would do if she tried to appeal to them. They not only would not listen to her; they would take the revolver from her and leave some one to hold her there and keep her from reaching anyone who might listen to her. So, as they bawled at her, there flashed to her what to do: not to try to stop them, but to pass them and beat them to the jail!

Jim had said it was useless to appeal to Sparston. The warden knew the men were coming to take Edgar, and he would not

shoot down his friends to defend a murderer already condemned to death. But if she could show Sparston the revolver and make him believe her, that would be different. Only in July he had fought off men who had come for a negro arrested but not yet tried; so if she could make the warden believe that Edgar was not guilty, would he not fight for him? If he did, he could hold the jail against five times the number of men Luke Kendall led.

She must have put on the brake the moment before, since now, as she loosed

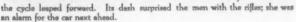


She must have put on the brake the moment before, since now, as she loosed it, by them so swiftly that they only shouted

it, the cycle leaped forward. Its dash surprised the men with the rifles; she was by them so swiftly that they only shouted an alarm for the car next ahead; but she was by that too before the men in it could fairly cover her. They howled at her, and after she had passed, one fired; whether the shot was aimed at her or fired in the air, she did not know; but she was not hit.

Half hid in a cloud of dust, she swept by a third car and came upon the fourth. Luke Kendall's voice bawled at her; his shout, like the others', told that he





thought she was a man; and when she did not stop, two rifles flashed at her together. The powder-gas was in her throat as she bent lower over the handlebars and swerved the motorcycle past the car; a louder report followed her as she left the car behind,—the noise of a shotgun,—and shot sang against the metal of her machine; shot pricked her legs and burned her bare hands; dizziness seized her, and she swayed; but if Jim was right in his count of the cars, only one more would go ahead of her; she steadied and pulled the motorcycle



straight and bent blindly forward and let it run ahead.

EDGAR DOUG-LASS stood at the barred door of his cell in the Harrow jail waiting for the men who were coming to lynch him. More than hours before, Carow, the negro cleaned the corridor floor, had told him they were coming; they would be Briar County men; the jail guard would pretend to resist; then the Briar County men would get in and take him from his cell and motor him away somewhere and hang him.

It was the day upon which the judge had sentenced him to hang; it was the day upon which, as he well knew, many men had boasted that he would hang; the manner of the guards—one avoid-

ing to look at him, another suddenly savage toward him, another overkind—more than confirmed the negro's story. Before midnight, Luke Kendall and Luke's friends would take him from jail and hang him, and there was nothing for Edgar to do but wait for them to come.

After he was sentenced and before his lawyers won the new trial, he had tried to accustom himself to the definite certainty of his death upon this day; even after the new trial was ordered, he had known it was only a delay; he was going to die soon for a crime which he did not

commit and because the person for whom he cared more than all else in the world had accused him of it. But the stunned horror and amazement of that had passed: at first the knowledge that Ethel along with all the rest—indeed, she more than all the rest—had charged him with murder alternately had crushed him and goaded him to defiance.

Then came the trial, and he faced her and he knew-though no private word passed between them - that could she have done as her heart desired, she would have taken his side against them all, but she was caught in the hideous, unbreakable chain of circumstances which condemned her to convict him. She had looked at him just long enough to let him know that, and then she had not been able to gaze at him at all; but he knew that she was suffering with him. So when he thought of her recently, it had been with longing and love for her; and now, as his fingers clasped the bars of his cell, he longed to touch her fingers again before he died, to feel again the smoothness of her cheek as once he had.

The noises outside were more distinct. Inside was a clanging of doors and the calling of guards for the farce of a defense of him. The loud mockery of preparations wrought him to rage. He retreated from his door and snatched up the stool which, with his cot, furnished his cell, and prepared to strike down the first who broke in upon him. Then he put it down; what could he do against them? He returned to the cell door and stood quiet. The noise outside was louder; there were more motor-cars, and men shouting, and now a shot.

How strange an hallucination at this moment that he should believe he heard Ethel's voice! She seemed calling him, crying his name down the corridors of the jail. The shouts outside and a volley of shots did not drown her voice; she seemed somewhere just beyond the bars of his door, crying to him to answer.

He wet his lips and pressed them tight together. Now there was the sound of battering at the jail door; and as he heard the howls of men demanding that he be given to them, he heard also Ethel's voice beseeching him to answer her. He seized the bars of his door and—he seemed to feel her fingers! Yes, her

fingers—cold and wet and sticky with the blood where the shot had burned them—but her fingers! He cried out: "Ethel! Ethel! You are here?"

And her breath was on his face as she cried: "It is you! Edgar, you are here! Oh, he said you were here, but I had to know it! I got here before them; I beat them here; and Sparston's believed me that you didn't do it. So he's fighting for you; he wont give you up!"

"Ethel! What do you say? He's believed you; he's fighting for me!"

"Yes; listen! Edgar; did you hear that? He's training the riot-gun from the door. For he's going to fight for you, and they'll never take you now; and I can show everyone that you're innocent!"
"What? Ethel, you say—"

"Yes, yes! I can show everyone you're innocent; and I've got here in time to save you! So it's—it's going to be—all right! Everything! Edgar, everything's

going to be all-right!"

She sank to the floor of the corridor. Through the bars his hands still held her. Though he couldn't understand much of anything else, he knew that she was there, and that since she was there, somehow, for some reason, the jailers were fighting for him. No one else came into the jail. Indeed, the firing and shouting outside kept up for only a moment more, and then followed only bawls and threats and the scurry of men running away.

DOWN the corridor which led to Edgar's cell came Sparston, bearing a light. His coming roused the girl huddled on the floor. In the light of the warden's lantern, she and the boy stared at each other, and each cried out a little at the look of the other. Then the jailer came to put them apart. But before that, each knew that it was going to be all right—that everything now, as she had said, was going to be all right.

And everything was. The second trial of Edgar Douglass, at which Ethel was the chief witness for the defense, was dismissed on the second day at the request of the State's attorney, after he had arrested and had obtained the confession of a levee negro to whom had been traced ownership of the revolver found near Walt Kendall's body.

THE confessions of a man who has blood on his conscience—and the under side of his right front fender.



Psychology—and a 1910 Model

By Wilbur Hall

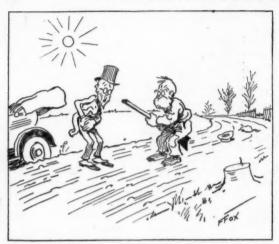
HAVE run over a ILLUS hen! Figuratively my hands are stained with innocent blood. Literally, of course, they are quite clean,—the blood being, as a matter of fact, on the under side of my right front fender,—but I am as guilty as the unhappy Macbeth.

I killed the hen.

I am quite aware that the juggernauting of a mere hen is a matter of small consequence, especially since I scrupulously paid the farmer who owned her, not because he threatened me with a very large bore shotgun, but because I am a responsible person. I say that the death of the fowl is of negligible importance -to many, I presume, it would appear an inconsiderable incident. But for me. accustomed as I have been for years to observe psychological phenomena and noumena, it is vastly signal in its summation of a series of events which have completely changed many of my habits of mind. A month ago, for instance, I would have sworn that I should never be guilty of the violent death of any creature. As far as I am aware, I have never before killed anything larger than a mosquito: it is not my nature. And as for running down with a motor-car and annihilating a fowl, especially a female fowl! That was my state of mind a month ago, and to-night, even as I write, I am the owner of a Harford, 1910 model, and am going to bed shortly

ILLUSTRATED with blood on my conscience
BY F. FOX and the under side of my fender!

O tempora! O mores! It is doubtless incumbent upon me to explain that I am Merrithew Simonds Stitt, M. A., Ph. B., head of the psychology department of Wesley College, which will doubtless make clear my intense interest in the psychology of automobile ownership, as I observe it in myself and my family-with the exception of my daughter, Patricia Amaranth Stitt. I am compelled to exclude her, for reasons which will presently appear. Patricia was named for her grandmother on her mother's side and for her mother, formerly Miss Amaranth Bones, Sc. B., B. A., and honor pupil in the year 1888 at Miss Sedgeway's Select School for Young Ladies, near Philadelphia. At times I despair of correcting Patricia's deportment, especially since her mother has plainly capitulated to the young lady and rather needlessly encourages her, it seems to me, in her flaunting of many of our family traditions. Her young associates call her "Pats" and partake with her of a program of sophisticated epicureanism strangely at variance with my ideas and those of my earnest young son, Wesley Bones Stitt (named for our beloved little college and for his mother's family), on most matters of education, social relations and even-I am grieved to say-morals! I would not give the impression that Patricia is unmoral-far



I paid the farmer, not because he threatened me with a shotgun but because I am a responsible person.

from it. But her fondness for dancing. -including all these newer phases of the so-called terpsichorean art, - for the most repugnant variety of slang, for motion-picture theaters, doubtful magazines, and for somewhat startling modes in dress are all, I may say, quite unsettling to me. Therefore-at least I suppose it is because of her "advanced" ideas that her attitude regarding automobiles had differed from my own and that of my wife and our studious son-Patricia, I find, is little changed by the events of the past month. To quote her, no longer ago than this evening, at our supper table:

"Dad gives me a sprain in my vocabulary when he talks about 'the psychology of motoring,'" she said flippantly. "If he'd learn the three-step, and eat pie with his knife once in a while, he'd be more human."

The child has no conception of the importance of scientific data. I hope that I have, and therefore I desire to set down some of the more important points in our recent experience, because it seems to me that these may throw some light on the psychological evolution of what I may refer to as the race-mind in its relation to motoring. To begin with, my own mental attitude was one of extreme intolerance for autoists—partly, I suppose, because of the brazen and even

violent character of that man Plinkins, who pretends or purports to give instruction in psychology at the small, struggling and - in all Christian charity -- vacuous institution of Clearmont, near Wesley College. Clearmont makes the most presumptuous claims as to scholarship, and I have just called out to my daughter to inquire by what score their football team defeated ours at Wesley this fall.

Patricia replies: "Sacred cats, Dad! you aren't going to bawl us by sticking that in your essay, are you?"

I say gravely and patiently: "My dear child, I wish you would refrain from such language. I intend mentioning that score incidental to citing the difference between real scholarship and mere crass victory at games. Be good enough to state the score to me, my dear."

"Why, you ought to remember, Dad," she responds. "They simply wiped up the field with us—twenty-four to three; and our goal from placement was a fluke that might properly be called an act of God!"

Very well! It was almost immediately after that match, in which brute strength overpassed mentality and intellectual promise, that I was leaving the sidewalk to cross the street from our campus, when I heard a sudden angry cry and the shrill tooting of a horn, and sprang back hastily in bare time to escape mutilation under the roaring automobile of Professor Plinkins. I recognized him at once, and I was much enraged.

But so, evidently, was he. He stuck his head from under the top of his little machine and snorted. "Hi, you poor little crab!" he shouted. "Can't you watch where you're going, you simpleton?"

For the moment my indignation seduced my philosophy. I said: "Where I'm going! You decadent guide of a peripatetic gasoline stove—why don't you look what you're about?"

He called back that it would be a good job if some person were to run over my toes and teach me to mind my step, and then he drove on, preventing me from expressing to him some of the thoughts concerning his past history and future destination which were in my mind. He drove off, I say, but his impudent laughter floated down to me as I stooped from the curb to recover several folios and Kant's "Critique," which, in my trepidation, I had dropped. I said then, sincerely, I may assure you, that I would never again have any communication, social or otherwise, with any owner or driver of an automobile, unless it were in a police court where I could testify against him in an action to restrict his liberty for reckless driving. And most devoutly did I hope that that action would be found to lie against this impossible Professor Plinkins! To-night I have to record that I have turned the tables on him, but also to set down that I have changed my mind as regards autoists. Is there not a Harford, Model 1910, in our stable at this instant, and is it not stained-with the blood of an innocent and plump White Orpington hen? I do not ask these questions flippantly. I am reciting my observations of psychological phenomena. I am amazed, myself!

To my family at dinner that night I mentioned my narrow escape from the death-car of Professor Plinkins.

My wife suggested, with unnecessary asperity, I thought, that it was a wonder I wasn't run over and killed a dozen times a day, I was so careless. She said: "You shouldn't expect motorists, my dear, to carry along a boy with them to watch out for you crossing a street."

I was somewhat taken aback at this, but my daughter confirmed her mother's view of the matter. "My hat, Dad!" said she. "You know you do wander around like a pterodactyl, or whatever it is, in the pleocene age! Get a pair of rubber heels and bounce along!"

My son, according to his usual custom, was at table with his books—on this occasion a Greek dictionary in which he was diligently pursuing an irregular verb. I placed a choice bit of cutlet where he could impale it on his sus-

pended fork, and asked him what he thought of Plinkin's impertinence to me.

He secured the meat, and without looking up he said impatiently: "'Aniesei!" Bless my soul, that doesn't appear—ah, that must be it! The apodosis is not brought out until the following line—yes, that is it! What was it, Father?"

I said that I had been all but run down by Professor Plinkins, and went on to retail my sensations and my wrath. My son was deep in his book again, however, and only glanced up in a moment to say: "Certainly, by all means, no doubt!" and returned to his Greek conditional sentence.

Patricia observed presently: "If you'd only come out of it, Dad, and buy us a machine—"

My wife looked at me significantly then. "Kimoto has one," she announced.

I said: "What was that, my dear?" "Kimoto has an automobile."

"You mean our boy Kimoto?" I asked. I could scarcely credit the news. Kimoto is our Christian Japanese boy—a youth whom I myself took from our church mission a year ago in order to educate and Americanize. I had had high hopes for him, and he had but recently enrolled as a prospective missionary in his own land, and had begun a course in homiletics at Wesley.

I thought they were having their little jest. "Seriously, wife, just what do you mean?" I asked.

Patricia said: "English language, Dad. Subject, Kimoto; verb, has; object, an automobile—and if there was any class three generations back in the Stitt family, we would have that same object. Everyone has them now'days: With Bords for four-ninety in Los Angeles, and Midlands at seven hundred, with an extra wheel, one-man top, head-, side- and tail-lights, speedometer, three-point suspension and everything—oh, what's the use? We'll never have one. I'm going to marry one."

I rapped the table with my knuckles. But my wife took the child's part. "You see to what extremes you have brought our daughter?"

I said: "You don't mean to convey the impression that you encourage her in such unmaidenly statements, surely?"

Mrs. Stitt laughed rather sarcastically. "Patricia doesn't need any encouragement, nor does she heed discouragement," she said. "If she asserts that she will marry a man who has an automobile. she will undoubtedly carry out her idea.

"Well, I should hypothecate!" said Patricia vulgarly. "In the meantime, until I can make up my mind between a suit of clothes who has a sixty-horse Lackard, and another suitor with a Piat race-about, I'm going out with Kimoto and lean up against the wheel of his little wreck."

I said peremptorily: "You shall do

no such thing!"

My wife sighed. "Poor Merrithew," she exclaimed resignedly. "How little you know of your own limitations!

Of course that encouraged my frivolous daughter. I rose stiffly and begged to be excused from further discussion of the matter. But when I went out to the front porch, I did not seat myself there as was my custom, but strolled quietly to the rear of the house to find our Christian Japanese boy Kimoto.

He was in our barn, which has been disused for some years past, since our family horse Ahasuerus died, and when I first entered I could not see himonly heard somewhat stifled but unmistakably Japanese language, of a character I should judge to have been expressive of disapprobation or dissatisfaction. I did see his automobile,-at least I saw the one that was there,-and shortly Kimoto's face, covered with grime and dust and oil, was stuck out from under the machine, and Kimoto grinned at me.

Parenthetically I wish to state that I think the language of a nation, and the differentia which set its tongue apart from other tongues, ought to be studied by all psychologists. I am attempting here to reproduce the broken English of Kimoto, not to smarten my account, but for reasons which psychologists will appreciate. Let me proceed.

Kimoto grinned. "Hello, Mist' Stitt," he said. "How you like? Jap'nese boy buy him auto. You like? He high-tone auto, uh-huh?"

I frowned severely. "See here, Kimoto," I said; "come out. I want to talk with you."

He extricated himself by a series of most extraordinary spinal contortions, hitching himself along with his shoulders and his heels, and came forth, still grinning.

I said: "Kimoto, this was very wrong in you-squandering your meager sav-

ings on an automobile."

Kimoto laughed shrilly, as those Japanese do. "Him not sklaunder, Mist' Stitt. Oh no, not very so. Kimoto poor Jap'nese boy - catch few dolla' - put him in bank. Him still in bank, Mist' Stitt, uh-huh!"

"You mean you have not withdrawn your savings—taken them out from the

bank?" "Yess!"

"Then how did you buy-that is, how did this car come into your possession?"

Kimoto showed all his teeth, as those Japanese do. "Easy so. Kimoto put him money in bank, fine, high-tone. 'Nother Jap'nese boy-Nashamura-he got two auto. Uh-huh, style Jap'nese boy, Nash-Kimoto say from hearing amura. Nashamura, how much you like take catch for one little auto? Nashamura say, yess, like take catch ten dolla' paydown. Soon take catch ten more dolla', bimeby ten dolla', bimeby ten dolla'-'stallment high-tone plan, uh-huh. So

I heard a giggle and my daughter's voice. "Pretty soft, eh, Dad?" Patricia queried, and I turned to see her and her

mother.

I fear they quite misunderstood my object in questioning Kimoto, for Mrs. Stitt asked Kimoto if he would like to take me for a little spin.

Kimoto was very willing-but I was not. "No, thank you," I said austerely. "I only came down to remind Kimoto of the kindlings." And then I returned

to the house.

At breakfast I had other intimations that my daughter had supposed I was interested in our Christian Japanese boy's venture, with some idea of emulating him. "Ten down and ten a month, Dad," she said, whilst I was engaged in perforating the top of my egg.
"What was that, my child?" I parried.

"Oh, nix on the ingénue lines!" she said saucily. "I'm going to vote next fall, and I can't find my bib and teething ring on the ranch. I said that ten iron men a month for a whole automobile no interest and no taxes, and gasoline down to eleven cents—would look good to anybody but an undertaker's client!"

And that evening when I returned from the college, my wife and Patricia met me on the porch and introduced a stranger. He was a Mr. Stearns, and he had a second-hand automobile—a used car, he called it. I cannot distinctly remember what happened in the next few hours. I confess that I was stung by my wife's comparison between myself and our humble Christian Japanese boy. I was irritated by my daughter's openly expressed skepticism as to the honesty of

my asseveration that I wished always to do the best I could for my family. I bought that used car.

It was a Harford, four-cylinder, thirty-horsepower, model of 1910. Mr. Stearns accepted three hundred dollars in cash. I was to pay ten further installments of fifty dollars each.

"But," said Mr. Stearns, "you will never pay out on that 'bus."

"Why?" I asked, in amazement.

"Oh, perfectly simple," he said. "In two months you will be ready to trade it in on a good car."

"A good car—" I began feebly. "I had understood you to say that this—" Mr. Stearns sniffed.



She did back over one of my favorite flower bads in starting.

"Why, this," said Mr. Stearns, "is an all right little boat—plenty stanch enough to break yourself in with. But of course, a model of 1910—"

Patricia said: "Of course—couple of years after the war! And forty-five more will make fifty, Dad!" She turned to Mr. Stearns. "What will it cost to put this Methuselah model in shape so she will pull from the garage to the front walk?"

He estimated promptly that fifty dollars would do it, although of course, he added, there were things like a self-starter, and new upholstery, and one spring almost gone, and a new gas-tank of some sort.—at

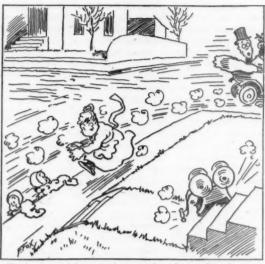
eighteen dollars,—and new batteries, and— He addressed me in all this matter, but he might quite as well have talked to the teller at my bank. I failed to see how I figured in the negotiations. I said proudly, however, that I should secure everything for the car that was needed to make my family happy. That simple remark, a week later, cost me \$129.70.

For the time being, all was serene at our home. There was a fly in the ointment, if I may use the expression without offense, and that was the demeanor of our Japanese boy. He drove in and out of the yard daily, with an appearance quite lofty, and very rarely split the kindlings as he had done formerly. My wife was rather vague when I spoke to her on this point. So, as it was a much simpler solution, I split the kindlings myself.

Kimoto motored on Sunday mornings,
—not to the mission Sunday school,—
and he dropped homiletics at the college.

As' soon as our new purchase was brought home from the garage by an abrupt young mechanic, I said that I should, I supposed, be compelled to learn to operate the car in order to make it of any use to my family. But Patricia laughed.

"Learn to drive!" she cried. "Why,



The last I saw of the twins, she was picking them up from the gutter.

Dad, you wouldn't learn the difference between the intermediate and the footthrottle until you were eighty, and by the time you knew how to change your mixture you'd have been dead ten years."

My wife was smiling, and so I refrained from rebuking Patricia. "Who is to drive it, then?" I asked.

"I'm elected," she said.

I said: "What, you? My dear child, I shouldn't care to have you taking lessons from any of the professionals whom I have observed, and as for—"

I have observed, and as for—"
Patricia said: "Oh, can that chow and come on. I can steer that old tow-boat with one hand and my feet in a plaster

cast. Climb in-let's roll!"

My wife assisted me into the rear seat and I firmly seized hold of the side of the car. Patricia called out to know if my son Wesley were going, and he came presently, a volume of integral calculus in his hand and a green eyeshade under his hat. He was repeating mathematical formulæ, but he left off when once he was in the seat with Patricia, and became fascinated by her skill.

For that matter, so was I. It was unearthly. She did back over one of my favorite flower beds in starting, but then she plunged forward competently enough, missed my neighbor Dr. Horfinch's brick wall narrowly, swung about

precipitately and dashed down the driveway and into the street. Mrs. Horfinch was passing with the twins in their perambulator, and the last I saw of them she was picking them up from the gutter, and the baby carriage was on my own front steps. I had no leisure then to learn how this miracle had happened, but that night Dr. Horfinch refused to speak to me; and a month later, at the christening, the name of the boy twin was changed from Merrithew S .-- for myself, it was to have been-to Herbert Spencer Horfinch. I was deeply hurt, for really it was not I who had been driving that car.

No, it was Patricia. She missed by a hair a crossing officer on the nearest corner, avoided ruining a cripple who was attempting to reach the curb in safety, struck a wet pavement and skidded—that was what she called it. It is an unlovely colloquialism, but meaningful. By some legerdemain she contrived to turn directly about in the street and to charge back upon that unfortunate cripple before he could recover from his first fright. He sat down in the gutter and began to scream. I did not blame him. I myself screamed.

Patricia swung by the poor man somehow, and we resumed our initial trip. I had just begun to regain my composure and almost to enjoy the sensation of speeding along the smooth roadway when Patricia turned abruptly into a side street and brought us into a very complex and embarrassing collision with the rear of a dray belonging to the Crenshaw, Stone & Hutton Paper Box Company. daughter maintained later that the driver of this wagon was not looking where he was going, although, since we ran into the posterior portion of his vehicle, and that without any warning to him, I cannot see how Patricia could prove her contention. The accident distressed me exceedingly, for a reason

which will be apparent presently—for the entire contents of this dray, consisting of pasteboard boxes, cartons, crates and cases of an innumerable variety, were pitched into the street, and the team of horses ran away.

At the moment of the impact with the wagon I leaped from my seat and alighted sprawling in the road, from whence I was assisted shortly by a frivolous youth who told me that I ought to have had a surf-boat to make the trip in, and asked me if I had ever been a steeplechase jockey-I fell so hard. Ignoring his levity, I went back at once to our automobile to determine what the effects of the accident had been on the others. Patricia and her mother were not hurt, -in fact, they expressed indignation at my having left the seat and begged me to get in at once,-and as for my son, he only stared about him a moment, absent-mindedly, and turned to his calculus. I climbed into my place, and the crowd that had assembled cheered.

But our car would not move. The collision had caused some maladjustment, and Patricia struggled with the various handles, knobs, buttons and levers in vain. Finally she said:

"There you are-that's what comes of



She missed the crossing officer by a hair.

buying a family heirloom! Come on, let's pile out and get away, or somebody will think it belongs to us."

I descended and was in the act of assisting my wife to the street when a policeman rode up, leading the runaway team, and pointing us out to a very irascible little gentleman, in his coatsleeves, who came toward me panting. Instantly I recognized him, and my heart sank. How could I know that the Hutton I had met was connected with this miserable paper-box company? How could I know that Patricia was going to turn into this side street and collide with the rear of that company's

dray? I took off my hat and attempted to explain.

But Mr. Hutton was unable or unwilling to listen to my remarks. He advanced on me threateningly. "Oh, it's you, is it?" he shouted angrily. "A three-hundred-dollar bill of boxes for a special rush order-and look at 'em: scattered over three blocks! A driver I wouldn't have lost for worlds: in the hospital! A new dray ruined beyond And all by a repair! miserable, narrow-chested little college professor, in a gasoline wheelbarrow! Take my name off your list, Stitt-do you hear me? Take it off - and every penny with it; and if I ever subscribe a bad dime to Wesley College again, it'll be when you run me down

on a dark night some time, roll over me with your dirty little tin car and empty my pockets! I'll send you the bill for damages to my wagon on the first of the month, and I wish you good-day!"

I couldn't speak. Five weeks before, I had secured his subscription of one thousand dollars to the endowment fund of Wesley College, and our president had assured me that I would have my long-promised increase in salary next term on the strength of it! I looked sadly at Mr. Hutton's retreating back and then at Patricia.

She said: "Dear Father, take your

glassy stare off me, for the love of Mike! I'm sorry I bumped your friend's delivery wagon—but I wish he'd been on it when I did it! Let's go home."

I glanced about for my son—my wife having gone on ahead rather haughtily when she sighted Mr. Hutton coming—and saw Wesley sitting on the curb, figuring a mathematical problem. When I called to him, he looked at his watch, uttered an exclamation and dashed away toward the college without answering. I gave my name and address to the officer on horseback, and sadly returned to the garage, where I requested them to remove our motor-car from the street.



The accident distressed me exceedingly.

Promptly on the first of the month I was presented with a bill from Crenshaw, Stone & Hutton for \$385, and for repairs on our Harford, amounting to \$62.65. When I asked the abrupt young mechanic what the sixty-five-cent charge was for, he responded that it was for oiling the fifth wheel, and went away. I learned some time later that he was ridiculing me.

I prefer to touch lightly on the gloom which surrounded me at Wesley College when the news of Mr. Hutton's withdrawal from our list of subscribers spread about. Let me, instead, advert to the effects I noted in connection with the psychological evolution worked by automobile ownership. Kimoto, Japanese boy, was quite a ruined character and no longer a Christian. He had traded in his first car (already) for a newer model, with a long, rakish appearance, and the look of having been through a clothes-wringing machine and of having come out with everything about it flattened down. It bore the same relation, in general terms, to ordinary models of automobiles-say our Harford-as one's reflection in a convex horizontal mirror bears to oneself. Our boy sat almost on the floor of the machine, with his legs straight out before him, and on his feet extraordinary tan shoes, over white stockings. He bought a leather coat, and wore this and a large cap and hideous goggles; he gave up Sunday school entirely, and most of his studies, and was arrested twice for exceeding the speed limit. When I learned of his having entered a race-meet for Japanese motor-drivers, I remonstrated with him.

"Good so," he said, grinning as these Japanese do — they have remarkable teeth, I may observe—and giggling irritatingly. "High-tone boat me, uh-huh? Make bet him Nashamura two-againstone I Kimoto Jap'nese boy lick spot off all other Jap'nese boy in race-speed. Much high-damn-class, me, yess?"

I realized that he was a hardened character and spoke to my wife about discharging him. When I went down a day or so later to do so, Kimoto giggled, as is his custom.

"Much thank, Mist' Stitt," he said.
"Kimoto Jap'nese boy get catch twoday 'go high-tone job, uh-huh. Too
move-slow in scollege profess' house—
Kimoto show-for to young man hightone car nex' week-time. Say good-by
to you, Mist' Stitt, go-to-hell!"

He left immediately.

From a quiet, kindly, studious alien youth to a profane and impertinent professional chauffeur—in a month: that was the change in Kimoto.

In my wife the change took another track. She opened a charge account at a fashionable department store, and the items placed on the bills were simply staggering to me. She began with an automobile veil and ended with a picnic trunk for the auto, a complete automobiling costume for herself and one for Patricia, and a book of road-maps containing information on roads, et cetera, which, had we pursued them, would have ended us in New York City and bankruptcy in two months. When she had got as far as the new automobile coat, she began making disparaging remarks about our Harford, Model 1910, and when she had acquired an automobile trunk, at an expense (charged) of \$45.59, to be placed on the rear of the machine, she declared outright that our little conveyance was not of proper class to grace the things she had purchased, and came out strongly for trading it in on a new-model Tierce-Sparrow, with enclosed body, at a total cost of forty-five hundred dollars. I am stating the exact truth. This was what she proposed.

My daughter Patricia was little changed, because, in view of her extremely advanced ideas of life, there was so little about her to change, but a most startling psychological development was that in my son, Wesley Bones Stitt. I was not aware of the evolution in him until shortly after the machine was sent back to us from the garage, after Patricia's initial effort at driving it. Then one morning while I was donning my trousers preparatory to going down to breakfast, I heard the roaring of our Harford, a scream from Patricia and-I grieve to say—an oath, uttered by my son's voice! I hopped to the window, having only one trousers leg adjusted to my person, and being under the necessity of holding the other one and the tops in my hand, and there I received the most astounding shock of my life. My son, without a book in his hands, was sitting in the driver's seat madly jerking at the levers and so on beside him, kicking wildly at the pushirons with his feet, and-to my unmitigated horror - swearing steadily, while backing successively across my garden plots, through a high board fence, through my neighbor Spidiggle's chicken corrals and squarely into his expensive glass cucumber frames. There he stopped the machine,-or it may have stopped itself,-but he did not stop his revolting use of profane and violent

I hastened to don my trousers and shoes and ran to my son's aid. I was constrained to close my ears when I approached. Looking directly through me, in an intense abstraction amounting to hysteria, he continued to curse and swear in the most unbridled manner, addressing his remarks to the car, to the brakes, to the reverse mechanism, to the engine, to automobiles in general and to our inoffensive, if ancient, Harford model in particular. I fled from him, in my grief and astonishment, and Patricia climbed into the driver's seat and conducted the car back over the course by which it had come. It ran in a wobbly fashion, due to the divellicated condition of its tires, and from its internal motive parts it emitted the most painful succession of sounds and noises that I have ever heard.

Wesley, my son, thereupon took off his coat. When the car came to rest he jerked open the tool-box, snatched out the entire kit of appliances and began feverishly to remove the wheels. Patricia ran into the house and telephoned to the garage, and presently the abrupt young mechanic to whom I have adverted before, appeared.

Wesley, straining at a nut that would not come loose, "Is she grunted. ruined?" he asked.

The abrupt mechanic looked at our car thoughtfully. Then he said, in a slow and precise fashion, quite unlike his usual speech when presenting bills for settlement: "Oh, I wouldn't go that far! No, she aint ruined."

Patricia asked: "What would you advise?"

The mechanic surveyed the car again. "Well, you've got a first-class speed-ometer," he remarked. "If it was my battle-ship, I'd jack up that speedometer, run a new car under it and bolt it on." Patricia sniffed. "Oh, so you don't

fancy our 'bus, then?"

He said: "Well, yes. Yes, I do. Take her to the top of a cliff, near the ocean, put a load of dummies in her, slip her into the high and run her over that bluff, and I'd say she'd make as pretty a motion picture as was ever filmed."

Patricia glared. I have observed that

while she herself is the most caustic of persons when speaking of our automobile, she flies to the defense of it when others disparage it. She tilted her head. "You are too wise for your age!" she exclaimed loftily. "You don't care what you do to one's feelings, do you?"

Patently the young mechanic mis-understood her. He laughed. "Oh, feel-ings!" he said humorously. "Well, of course if there was any objections from the folks that owned the ocean-"

My son's wrench slipped at this point, and his violent expressions rather diverted the attention of the others. The mechanic took the wrench, and in two hours the car was again ready to run. I called Wesley's attention to the fact that he would have to hasten unless he desired to miss his class in Economics III, but the boy was quite beside himself.

"Economics Three can wiggle along till it expires, for all I care a whoop," he growled. "I'm going to learn to drive this self-propelling vehicle if it takes two years and a leg! Here, Sis', how do you kick this damn gear-shift out of the reverse?"

I left them then and went sorrowfully to the college. All about me, before the day was over, arose inquiries as to the unprecedented absence of my son from his classrooms, but I avoided them circumlocutional monosyllables. That afternoon, by some strange coincidence, the college clock stopped. I merely state the fact, without comment.

I went home that evening to learn that Wesley Bones Stitt was in the city police station on two charges-speeding, and using profane language when remonstrated with by an officer of the law. I went to bed from the shock of his behavior of that day, and my wife bailed him out.

Such was the change in the mental condition and ideational habit of my son, and I come now to the most extraordinary psychological effect of all-the alteration in myself. I began to feel myself irresistibly drawn toward the driver's seat. I made a cautious essay at operating the car, found it quite simple, became interested, deliberately (this is a frank confession-must be, if it is to have scientific value!) missed a lecture on "The Psychological Phenomena of After-projection," by Dr. Xerxes Yerexes, of Athens, who was visiting Los Angeles, and drove one hundred and eighty miles in one day, getting seventeen miles to a gallon of gas and only stopping twice—tire trouble.

Two days later I started to drive to college for my morning classes, but became angered at the attempt of a young boy to pass me repeatedly on the boulevard in a Bord runabout, took off my tall hat and spectacles, and gave that young man the race of his life. I ended forty miles from the college with engine difficulties, and was compelled to spend the remainder of the day watching the

against putting himself in the way of motorists. And I did!

I drove in so close to him, going at forty miles an hour, that he screamed and plunged on his face under his own miserable wreck of an automobile, leaving part of one of his coat-tails whirling around in the spokes of my front wheel. But the lesson to him cost me dearly. In swinging by him and teaching him his manners, I lost control of the car for

a moment, plunged sideways almost into

stepped farther into my path. I put on

speed. I opened my cut-out. I took a firm grip on the wheel. I said I would

give this bumptious idiot a lesson

the ditch, righted the car with difficulty—and ran squarely over that large, plump White Orpington hen!

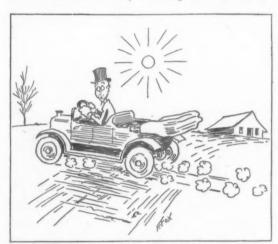
Quite the most astonishing thing about the whole psychological experience, as I view it coldly now, is that, for the moment, I did not seem to care. In fact, I was quite put out. I was angered at that unfortunate, silly fowl.

I exclaimed, vigorously, apostrophizing the hen: "Well, you dratted, squawking imbecile, you couldn't get out of the way, could you, you cackling lunatic, you!"

There are parts of this scientific exposition of which I, as a man of philosophy, am ashamed,

but which I, as a man of science, must set down. I confess to a confused mind when I attempt to account for the evolution of which I have written here. Of course, as Hume says: "The will, considered as a cause, has no more a discoverable connection with its effects than any material cause has with *its* effects." Obviously, therefore, my will has no attributable—

No, I give it up. We are going to trade our Harford in on a new car. Patricia and her mother have chosen it, and my son Wesley is out with the demonstrator now. He has been absent from his college classes for three successive days.



I made a cautious essay at operating the car.

mechanic in a roadside garage repair it. He was a very rough and profane person. I learned a great deal. And, as showing the effects of environment, when I attempted to crank the car for my return journey that evening and it kicked me, I violated a rule of my life—a fixed rule—and said, very emphatically, and I think quite naturally: "Oh, damn the thing!"

That was a week ago. This morning I saw that insufferable ass Plinkins, of Clearmont College, standing in the road a few miles out in the country, repairing a tire on his silly little out-of-date car, and I honked my horn. He looked up, scowled and deliberately

The Mystery of Women

By Owen Johnson

Author of "The Salamander," "Stover at Yale," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE A. BAKER

HEY were alone in the studio, Maurice Stengel, the master, and Hugo Marsden, his pupil, standing in judgment before a study of a nude which the young man, having adjusted it to his easel, was studying with a look of deep concern. Stengel examined it briefly with the incisiveness of a field marshal on inspection, a thin, nervous little bourgeois, cropped head, close-bearded, shrewd-eyed, incapable of anything but directness even to the point of brutality.

"What's this? Recent?" he said

abruptly.

"This winter's," said Marsden, already divining the verdict from the tone.

"Hmm-what else?"

The young man replaced the canvas with another and withdrew by the open window the better to follow unnoticed the subtle shades of criticism which passed over the master's face. Stengel was whistling nervously—a bad sign. Outside in the gardens the chestnut trees were putting forth their first green banners, about which swarms of sparrows were volubly proclaiming the end of old winter's tyranny. Above the potted housetops, the air was thrumming with the smooth, whirling flight of Paris boulevards.

"What else?" said Stengel for the tenth time; and for the tenth time, mutely, Marsden replaced one canvas by another and heavily withdrew, already convicted.

"Where's that bit you did in the school?" said Stengel, ceasing to whistle to himself. "Bring it out. No, leave this, Put the other beside it."

Marsden obeyed. Opposed to the routine of a perfectly mechanical group, the sketch, rapid, audacious, seized with enthusiasm, told the story. He joined the master at his distance, chin in hand, dullness in the boyish eyes which searched the contrasted canvases with profound dejection.

"You see?" said Stengel presently.
"Yes, I see," he answered. "It's not

the same-not at all the same."

"My dear Hugo," said Stengel, turning from the pictures to the young man, "it's all bad, quite bad. If you were groping for something and missing it, it wouldn't matter. The worst is it's all correct. You are thirty-one—five years out of the atelier; you ought to be a revolutionist and you paint like a little orthodox country curé."

He stopped, rolled a cigarette, and began to expound his theories on art:

"At twenty, school; at thirty, revolt; at forty, the decisive age. At forty a man either becomes a great artist or he falls by his own hand. At thirty you should be making mistakes, not painting correctly. At thirty we look to see what a man is trying to accomplish beyond forty, not a polishing-up of what he has learned at twenty.

"The soul of an artist is the soul of a rebel. If you see just as others have seen, why paint? Your canvas should give an effect of unbalance, of an idea struggling, of crudities, but crudities of overpowering audacity — of discontent that is also an enthusiasm for greater things.

"Paint, my boy, like a coxcomb, believe yourself a Raphael or a Velasquez,



"She never complains. She would die rather than put it into words. But she suffers. Why, every night when I come home, she is weiting.... From the way her eyes search mine, I know that she is in a torment of jealousy."

dare to believe in yourself! Be egotistical. Say to yourself: 'I know! The rest, old Stengel and the other jackasses, are sign-painters and formalists. I will show them. I will startle them, shock them out of their drowsy poses. I am young. I have I have vitality. force. I will smash through all their old conventionalities.' See-look at this sketch vou turned out at the school. You did it with the air of saying, 'If that old Correggio had known what I know, this is what he might have done!' Well, it was a gorgeous thing you did then, my boy. I should like to sign it myself! Do you understand what I am saying to you?"

"I have felt it myself," said Marsden, shaking his head.

"Diable! my dear boy," said Stengel, beginning to watch him more closely, "you know you have three terrible things against you." He smiled, raising a finger in turn three times. "You're good looking, you've enough money, and you have a charming wife — three ter-rible handicaps! You are not a hardheaded son of a

Brittany peasant like your old master. You like fine society — fine feathers. That's where you Americans get in

trouble.

"We painters here are good bourgeois; fine ladies bore us to death; we like our sanded restaurants, our bouillabaisse and our soupe à l'oignon. We don't care to change when Dame Fortune fills our

pockets.

"But you Americans—you are different. You'll never understand that the artist has nothing to do with a mob of millionaires, that an artist must live in his own atmosphere and be a little uncouth, snarl a little at the world that drives up to his doorstep. You can't talk with fools day after day and not end by talking like a fool. You must protect yourself; you must cherish your own thoughts, get used to meeting that shy strange person, yourself, or later on when you want to know him, you'll find he'll do nothing but bore you.

"Diable, you live too comfortably, don't you see; these nudes you're painting are nothing but well-bred conventional old maids! Change your point of view. Ah, that's true—you're married," he added, suddenly brought to a stop.

He came forward.

"You are happy with your wife, Hugo?"

"Absolutely."
"How long's it been—two years—

three?"
"Just two years."

"Hmm!" Stengel considered the young man again a long moment. "Of course, it's only fair to say this: Every artist goes through periods of absolute stagnation-dry rot-a complete arrestation of the creative faculties. It's a curious phenomenon-we all have felt it. Yes, in the most glorious outburst of production, we never know when we may fall suddenly into a long period of impotency. There is the reason why the artist is always unhappy, always afraid of the future, no matter what the triumph of the day: that ceaseless dread of having to acknowledge one day to himself, 'I am through; I can produce no more.' Ah, don't I know the feeling-I myself? Do you wish me to speak to you frankly?"

"Do so."

"You are too much in love with your wife—too happy, too engrossed in the contemplation, the perplexities, of another human being, seen and studied at every moment. Others have gone through it. Time will change that."

"It isn't that. My wife is jealous. She suffers," said Marsden abruptly, with a

moody intensity.

"Jealous? You think that distinguishes her from other women?" said Stengel, laughing. He nodded quickly: "So that's it—you mean jealous of your work?"

"Not exactly," said Marsden, hesitating; "but it makes her unhappy."

"What do you mean?"

Marsden felt called upon to defend the absent.

"It is not that she complains. She has never said a word to me, but all the same she suffers. I know."

"She doesn't complain—that's bad," said the old bachelor, shrugging his shoulders. "It's a way they have! She doesn't complain, but you are able to perceive that she suffers. The little wretches are not stupid at all. So that's it: I knew it; your heart is not in your work. Madame pouts and you are miserable, or madame weeps, in secret of course, and your heart is torn to rags. Well, turn her out of doors!"

"What!"

"You object—naturally, because that's what an artist should do. Well then, beat her!"

"You're not serious."

"The devil, but I am serious, only no one will believe me! Well, if you wont turn her out of doors or beat her, give up painting—it's very simple." Having had his little joke, the master relented a little. "Yes, now I understand everything: nothing behind the brush—no joy—no leaping imagination."

"It's quite ridiculous," said the young man, mortified at what he was to disclose; "you will probably be astounded. It's the models that make her unhappy."

"What!" exclaimed Stengel. "You are joking! Incredible, monstrous—but my dear boy, what have you married? I should never believe it. Mrs. Marsden has always impressed me as a woman of intelligence — of understanding — a

woman of the world. And you paint her to me as a blue stocking.'

"It is not prudery," said Marsden hastily. "Intellectually, she would not object. It isn't that. It's worse. It's the jealousy, the unreasoning, uncontrollable jealousy of one woman for another, no

matter how insignificant."

He continued, raising his voice and revealing all his agitation in short, quick steps and broken gestures: "I tell you she never complains. She would die rather than put it into words. But she suffers-mutely, with an anguish that is impossible for a man who adores a

woman, not to feel.

"Why, every night when I come home, she is waiting-in my arms the moment the door is open, and every time, from the way she trembles as she clasps me, from the way her eves search mine, I know that she is in a torment of jealousy. It is terrible! Sometimes I even believe her eyes are trying to discover telkale hair upon my clothes or torturing themselves with the thought-" He broke off, flinging his arms up in a gesture of despair. "If I did not adore her, it would be different. What am I to do? You know I dream of big decorations, that I need ten years of study at the human figure!"

"But a model is not a woman," ex-

claimed Stengel angrily.

"Not to a man," said Marsden with an ironical laugh.

"You've discussed this with her?" said Stengel thoughtfully.

"Never!" "What!"

"Never. It would be the hardest thing in the world, I'm afraid. I've waited, hoping she would change. Vain hope!"

"Yes, the discussion would be serious," said Stengel, beginning to whistle.

"I tell you I'm afraid. I should have to say things she might not understand. I should have to speak to her as an artist -as a stranger. I should have to make her see, what perhaps she's not yet ready to see-that the artist must keep inviolate his intimacy, that there is a side of the man which she can never completely share. She wont understand. I know she wont understand!"

"In plain words, a little woman who adores you passionately is tortured by the thought of a shivering little model, here every day before your eyes!"

"Yes."

"There is nothing wrong with your wife?" said Stengel with Gallic frankness. "She is not deformed?"

"She-I should think not!" exclaimed the young man, but he cut short his enthusiasm in deference to Anglo-Saxon

"The little fool," said Stengel abruptly. He rose and took up his hat. "Hugo, will you do me a favor? Remain here until six."

"What are you going to do?" exclaimed the young man nervously. "You are going to see her-to talk to her?"

"Silence, imbecile," said the master sternly. "Whatever I do-you are to know nothing about it. What, you are afraid!"

"You don't know my wife," said

Marsden hastily.

"Ta-ta-ta, I knew more about your wife the first five minutes I talked to her than you have found out in two years," said the old skeptic with a light wave of his hand. "She has a sense of humor, and that will save you! If you have nothing else to do, amuse yourself by throwing jack-knives through those shockingly stripped old maids-that's all they're worth!'

MRS. HUGO MARSDEN was both surprised and flattered to receive the visit of Maurice Stengel, who had the reputation of being a social bear and not an enthusiastic admirer of her sex. She was a fragile, rather eerie type of blonde. too delicately nurtured in social hothouses. Though already a mother, she had the air of still being a débutante. It was the masque of a young girl through which one seemed to perceive the avid and curious eyes of an awakening woman.

"She's not such a fool as he thinks," said Stengel to himself, not insensible to the quality of gentleness which was inseparable to her movement, her voice and

her glance.

"Madam, you are too clever a woman," he began, "not to have guessed instantly that I have been to see Hugo and that I am come to have a very serious conversation with his wife."



"I never keep things from my husband," she said. "Madame,"

She had divined nothing of the sort, but she was nevertheless extremely com-

plimented.

"You have seen the pictures," she said, all in a flutter of excitement. "Don't you think they are wonderful?"

"Extraordinary!"
"What an immense progress he has made!"

"Immense!"

There was a moment's drop in the conversation.



he said bluntly, "I don't believe it. You are far too clever."

"What do you think, Madame?" he said quietly, taking the chair she indicated.

"I?" she said, surprised.
"Yes, what do you really think?"
She hesitated, glanced at him and said:

"You do not like them then?"

"They are very bad," he said gravely. "What have you been doing to your husband?"

She rose in astonishment as though inclined to instant flight.

"You must forgive my rough way of saying things," he said in apology. "I am not a parlor animal. I have a blunt way of expressing myself; and besides, my errand is quite serious. Before I say anything more, there is one thing I must ask. Hugo is never to know that I came here, or of what I am going to say." He added with all the concern he could summon to his face: "If he suspected for an instant that I had guessed his secret, it would hurt him endlessly; he would never forgive me."

"I never keep things from my husband," she said, hesitating, but her

curiosity aroused.

"Madame," he said bluntly, "I don't believe it. You are far too clever."

"What do you mean?" she said without relaxing her defensive attitude.

"Have you told him what you really thought about his work?"

His glance held hers a moment and then she thoughtfully resumed her seat.

"I have your promise?"

"Yes."

"I am going to speak to you in the utmost intimacy about your husband," he said immediately, "as though we had known each other all our lives—as an old man is privileged to do to a young woman who could be his granddaughter, as indeed some one who had known you all your life would not dare to do." He smiled his blunt, appealing smile, continuing: "You're a woman of the world; you will see gradually as you go on, that life is made interesting by just such conversations as we are to have to-day. May I speak frankly?"

She nodded, answered his smile by one of her own, as though reassured.

"You knew what Hugo's been doing was bad," he said directly.

"I knew—that is, I felt—I have been a little worried."

"The brush is all right. It's in the man—there is something out of order there," he said gravely. "What have you been doing to him?"

"I? What do you mean?"

"I don't know; I'm asking you," he said artfully, perceiving her confusion and guessing her fear that he would divine the cause. "Do you know anything that is worrying him?"

"No-I can't think."

"You are happy-both of you?"

"Why, we adore each other."

"You are not a jealous woman, of course."

The eyes of the woman grew suddenly grave in the masque of the girl.

"You have not told me the truth," she said quietly. "You have seen Hugo and he has talked to you."

Maurice Stengel arose joyfully and

shook her hand.

"Thank heaven for that remark!" he exclaimed, throwing himself back contentedly in his chair. "If you had not perceived that, I should have given up hope. Now I know that you will understand me."

"You talked with Hugo, then?"

"I did."

But instantly, with an exclamation of distress, divining all that must have been discussed, the young woman covered her face in confusion.

"Bigre, she is a little darling," said Maurice Stengel thoughtfully, "a woman of to-day who can blush after two years of marriage! The deuce, forty years ago I should have sent all the art in the world to the devil for such a blush as that."

"What can you think of me?" she said at last, still veiling her glance.

"Think? I think you are a charming little simpleton who has almost wrecked a fine career."

His tone was so admonitory that, startled, she dared to look at him.

"So you are jealous," he said sternly.
"Frightfully—" she said with a shudder. "It's beyond me. I can't control it.
It's very wicked. I know I worry him.
Yet I have never said a word."

"Of what are you jealous—a model?"

he broke in.

"No, not the model herself, of course not. It's not that, and yet it is—oh, I can't explain."

She rose and passed nervously to the window.

"You don't need to explain at all," he said. "It's perfectly simple, perfectly simple, and yet it's not simple at all!" He sat a moment considering a way out before this modesty which did not displease him in the individual, much as he

had thundered against it in the race. Finally he said like a tutor scolding his pupil: "Well, well, come back here. You'll have me blushing myself. Sit down. I am going to tell you a story, and after I've told it I'm going directly away, and you are to think it over carefully and learn the lesson. It's an incident in my own life."

SHE was self-possessed again, and the faintest smile, lurking momentarily about the slanted eyelids, showed that she wasn't entirely lost to the humor of the situation.

"Forty years ago," he said, dwelling fondly on the words that still had power to conjure up the halcyon days, "I was somewhere around twenty-five. I am rather fond of hearing the sound of my own voice—pardon me if I wander a little in the telling. It's a reminiscence, and youth is the best part of it all, you know—the expectation and the longing."

She was not insensible to the privilege of intimacy with such a man as Stengel, who ranked as one of the three masters of the day.

"If you were to tell the story in my way," she said, smiling with a little touch of the authoritative charm of the woman who would come later, "it would be a very long story indeed."

The accents reassured him nor was he insensible to the compliment.

"Mon Dieu, Madame," he said, pulling at his mustache with the air of an old soldier when the talk is of battles. "I have had a rather stormy career. People talked about me—I made a little noise in this world. It was good looking ahead and good looking back. That's all any of us can say. That's enough." He stopped, looked at her suddenly, aware that he had responded to her flattery. "I am boasting again, like a schoolboy," he said, with a pretense at gruffness. "Back to our flock of sheep:

"At twenty-five I was the happiest mortal on the face of the earth. Think of it: I lived in a glorious rat-hole under the skies, for which I paid five francs a month—when I paid; when I had money I dined at the Café Anglais with the air of a Russian grand duke and paid eighty francs for a bottle of wine,

which I consumed in three delightful hours. The rest of the month, I fed my body on five sous a day.

"At this time I was absolutely certain of my star; the only thing that perplexed me was whether I should die a prime minister as well as the new Michael Angelo. If I entered a theater, or the opera. I believed every woman in the house would gladly strangle her husband at a word from me; and I used to stand in the crowd below, gazing sympathetically at the aristocrats in their boxes, and say to myself: 'Poor imprisoned butterflies bound in diamond chains, don't I understand the looks you send me? wouldn't you give, eh, to slip out of your blazing boxes and pass your arms through these of mine, for an escapade along the boulevards?'

"I thought you disliked my sex," said the young woman, breaking into a smile at this romanesque description.

"I? Never. I adored every one of them!" he went on, laughing, satisfied now that he had brought her to the mood he needed. "I was in love ten times a day: at a silhouette, rapid and disappearing in a pompous coach; for a pair of troubling eyes met an instant in the crowd; and a woman whose name I never even pronounced was sufficient to inspire a romance of a month. The more mysterious the woman, the greater the flame. And the women of that day, Madame, knew the art of being a woman. They studied, I might say, the sacred feminine mysteries. It is something that you moderns neglect. If I were to scold you, I could preach a pretty sermon on that topic."

"But you are going to scold me," she said, laughing again.

"If I paint myself to you as I was," he continued, "romantic, adoring, disciple of sentimental dreams, it is because to seize the point of what I am about to tell you, you must realize that I was very far from insensibility when any woman was concerned."

"I see that your theme is the mystery of women," she said brightly. Her eyes, fed by the suggestion of the brilliant silhouette of the past, had awakened to a coquetry of which she herself was not conscious. A little even of the elusive grace and high-bred allurement of these women of a more picturesque day seemed

to envelop her to his eyes.

"You have given me the title—mystery of women," he said seriously. "I have been speaking of those who by the movement of a fan, the turn of the head, the mere fleeting pause of a glance, could in some mysterious way send me roaming under the stars in an ecstasy of infatuation. Now I am going to speak of models."

INSENSIBLY her attitude changed. She became all at once restrained, alert, on guard, and her eyes, which had been keenly on his, turned away suddenly, gravely intent on the high bridge of her little foot sinking into its jeweled

slipper.

"It happened," he continued, throwing himself back in his chair, "at a great moment in my life—my first competition. I had selected the greatest composition ever evolved by any imagination since the days of the masters." He laughed at the remembered conceit. "I forget now what it was, only that all was centered about a single feminine figure, 'Diana surprised at the Bath' or 'Suzanne and the Elders.' I am quite certain it must have been one of those astoundingly novel conceptions.

"I had already completed the group once, after weeks of working twelve and fourteen hours a day without rest, haunted by grandiose visions of an applauding Paris, when of a sudden the fancy struck me that the central figure was very bad indeed - which it undoubtedly was. I seized my knife, and in five minutes every trace of it had been scraped from my canvas. I had exactly forty-eight hours to repaint it. twenty-five I did not even experience a tremor at the task. The model I had employed was by this time engaged elsewhere. A friend luckily placed his at my disposal, and I made ready for the

"I was at my easel concentrated on some vexing detail of the background, when my new model arrived.

" 'Monsieur Maurice Stengel?'

"'The same, my dear. You are the model? Good. Get off your things

quickly and take the pose. I am in the devil of a rush.'

"In a moment she said:

"'I am ready. What pose?"

"I placed her on the stand, carefully drawing the chalk about the feet to fix the pose, and as by luck I noticed she had naturally fallen into a more felicitous attitude, hurriedly made certain changes in my own composition.

"'All I ask,' I said severely, 'is for you to remember that I haven't a minute to lose. You do very well—you are not too fat. You have nice shades of color. I hope you don't get tired of posing at the end of five minutes. You will be paid double. It is rush work, remember!'

"'It is always rush work,' she

answered plaintively.

"'Well, well—when you've got to have a rest, say so, but not before."

"I fell to work, humming to myself, finding in her just the elements I needed. She was a very good model. I had really nothing of which to complain. I worked wonderfully, with an absolute concentration, greedy of every instant, and when at last the coming of the dusk forced me to stop, I was still feverishly snatching at the chance to fix a genuine inspiration.

"'Good, very good—enough—put on your clothes. To-morrow at seven!' I said, painting in rapidly, with a last few strokes, certain lowered tones in the background, made necessary by the new flesh notes. When I looked up, she had

rone

"Well satisfied, knowing that I had accomplished a tour de force which needed only a few hours' work on the morrow to complete, I put away my things and gave myself up to a feeling of relief and delight. I saw myself already crowned. For the first time I became conscious of all the labor of the last weeks. I experienced a great reaction—that rare sensation of triumph which sends the artist forth like a king on parade. It was the first of the month; my allowance was intact. I would go forth and spend every sou of it in a magnificent dinner at the Café Anglais, with a night at the opera to end off, where I felt sure a thousand women must be ready to tremble before my conquering glance.

"In a moment I had run down the

READ OOM RY A BUSSIN

"Thank you, Monsieur Stengel," she said, to my amazement. "What! you know me, you beautiful creature," I cried amazed, racking my brain to remember. "Impossible. I could never forget such eyes! Don't tell me—I have met you!"

stairs and out into my beloved Paris. Pleasure well earned was a sensation that intoxicated me. I swung onto an omnibus and gained the Boulevards. When I alighted, I already had my menu savorishly laid before my greedy nose. Two or three women, I thought, had glanced at me in the omnibus, old and with mustachios probably - but women still to show how vulnerable was their

"I had but a short block to go, when suddenly in the gay, dancing flood of light across the sidewalk, I beheld the slender silhouette of a young girl turning the corner, and the flash of the most beautiful ankle in the world. I had but a brief, mysterious glimpse, and she was gene, but just that glimpse of a brilliant little foot completely undid me. I hastened my steps. As luck would have it, she had stopped at the kiosk to buy the evening paper. Nearer to, I was more than ever enchanted with every line of the back, and the clinging skirt drawn loosely about the graceful hips as only a daughter of Paris can do.

"An immense curiosity urged me to see her face, to divine what eyes would look out at me. Under pretext of buying a paper, I went forward and found myself face to face with the mysterious charmer. Strangest of all things, she was more beautiful than ever, delicious, dainty archness which no one could pass unnoticed. She had eyes that no man could see without a desire to jump down them. She had a little hat set coquettishly on her head. I can see it yet, that little hat which defied all Paris to cover a more sparkling smile or more entrancing eyes. I was so overcome that I bought six papers at once. As heaven

accorded it, she dropped a piece of money. I flung myself after it, presenting it to her with some idiotic stammered words.

"'Thank you, Monsieur Stengel,' she

said, to my amazement.

"'What! you know me, you beautiful creature,' I cried amazed, racking my brain to remember. 'Impossible. I could never forget such eyes! Don't tell me-I have met you!'

"And Madame, with the most adorable laugh in the world. she answered:

"I should hope so. I left you an hour ago.' "

MAURICE STENGEL rose, glanced at the young woman, who had not altered in the slightest the gravity of her listening revery. Only this time she did

"As I promised—I am going," he said quietly. "You have named the story so well-you will need no commentator."

He took his hat, bowed and went out, leaving the young woman in the same revery, a curious dreamy smile on her lips, as her eyes continued steadfastly on the high bridge of her slender foot sinking into the jeweled slipper-a flash of silver mystery, that in the dim room shone as a dainty ankle shines in the lights of a crowded avenue.

"Perhaps," she said to herself finally. She rose with a swift, liberated movement, and then stood meditatively, one hand on the swaying curtains, gazing down at the yellow boulevards where the first lamps were winking. Then she gave

a determined little nod.

"Perhaps," she repeated. "But hereafter I shall walk home with him-from the studio!"

EDITH MACVANE has written a gripping set of short stories about the trials and adventures of a young Indiana girl studying for grand opera in Italy. The first is one of the most dramatic short stories we've ever published. It will appear in the next-the Marchissue of The Red Book Magazine, on the news-stands February 23rd. A/E hear much of the power of the Russian writers these days, but none of them has told a story of greater cumulative sweep than this.

Underground

By Ray Sprigle

Author of "Romance," "The Escape of Bill Newlands," etc.

WILLIAM OBERHARDT ILLUSTRATED

ERGE CHERKOFF hated Vladislaus Obedaitch, hated him with all the venom with which a man hates one whom

he has wronged. Serge had stolen Obedaitch's wife. And to this greatest injury of all he added, day by day, countless others, petty insults, taunts, even blows.

Vladislaus was a simple, kindly, inoffensive man, but courageous he was not. So he bore it all, his dishonor, the taunts and the blows, with only now and then a tortured protest whose impotence drew laughter and fresh torment from

Cherkoff was a Russian. Three years before, he had come from the Russias to the little Pennsylvania mining town and become one of the thousands of underground toilers drawn from every nook

and corner of Europe.

Obedaitch had sweated in the mines since his boyhood. His father before him had wielded pick and bar in the old Rushford mine, and Vladislaus had gone down early into the yawning pit mouth, first as mule-boy, then as miner. He was a Ruthenian, or White Russian, and from the meeting of White Russian and Russian there was the contempt of the Russian for one of the people of a conquered province.

All of the miners regarded Vladislaus with good-natured depreciation. Surely there was something strange about a man who would waste his time coaxing flowers to grow about his shack, who would nurse a broken-legged pup back to strength after he found it, outcast from some miner's home, on his way home from work one night. Why, too, was his shack painted? None of the others in the settlement were.

But if Vladislaus was slow to revenge his wrongs, if Vladislaus lacked courage and suffered the taunts and blows of Cherkoff without resentment, that same broken-legged pup that the Ruthenian had pursed, now a gaunt, undersized mongrel, was his master's never-daunted champion. For every curse and taunt and sneer of Cherkoff for either dog or man, the dog had a rage-filled growl and a wolf-like, cunning dive and snap that more than once drew blood from the tormentor. When Cherkoff armed himself with a revolver and nicked the dog's ear with an ill-aimed bullet, Obedaitch kept the cur locked in the shack night and day lest its courage be its own ex-

Two years after Cherkoff came to the Rushford mine, Vladislaus surprised everyone in the settlement by installing a wife in his neatly painted, flower-surrounded shack. He brought her from another mining community across the hills. Fair-haired, blue-eyed, submissive little Toda Radislov quit cooking for her father and hulking brothers and began cooking for Vladislaus Obedaitch because Vladislaus had saved enough to be able to pay her father two hundred dollars for her. Females are valuable in foreign mining communities.

FROM the moment he first saw her in cheap, stiffly starched gingham dress, standing in the doorway of Vladislaus'

cabin, Toda Obedaitch found favor in the masterful eyes of Cherkoff. And from that moment, too, he laid siege to her loyalty. But all his secret wooing brought no response. So he left her alone for a time, waiting until she should grow tired of Obedaitch. Then he renewed his attack. She was as unresponsive as before.

At last, enraged by her calm rejection of his attentions, he stalked into the Obedaitch cabin one day, and after beating her, dragged her to his own shack. Submissiveness was Toda's only marked characteristic. She submitted to Cherkoff as she would have submitted to anyone who proved himself her master by the

weight of his hand.

There were many among the neighbors who were willing and eager to tell Vladislaus what had become of his wife, when he returned to his cabin that night and found no supper and no Toda. Obedaitch went to Cherkoff's shack to retrieve his wife. Cherkoff met him at the threshold and overwhelmed him with a shower of kicks and curses and blows. Vladislaus fought, but it was as a child fighting a man. Vladislaus went back to his cabin—alone.

And after that Toda remained in Cherkoff's shack. At first he locked her in when he was at work. Then, when he had sufficiently terrorized her, her fear was substituted for the lock. Vladislaus took up his life where he had laid it down when Toda came. He cooked and washed and swept as he had before.

Cherkoff's high-handed and hardhanded conquest of another's wife was food for gossip for a week. But no one protested. If a man could not hold a wife, why then—what else was there for him but to lose her? The morality or immorality of the incident did not

occur to anyone.

But Vladislaus brooded. And in his heart there slowly began to grow hatred, a stranger to it before. And hatred by and by gave birth to a craving for revenge. And gradually his hatred and his visions of a horrible and a bloody revenge crowded everything else out of the mind of Vladislaus. His flowers were neglected. He, never washed his dishes any more. Sometimes he even forgot to eat. He grew thinner and his eyes

burned. Others would pass the cabin at night, and through the window they could see the sullen, stolid man sitting motionless, his head bowed; beside him his dog, more gaunt, fiercer, more like a wild beast than ever.

And as the hatred of Vladislaus grew, it seemed that the hatred of the big Russian grew even faster. Cherkoff did not taunt Obedaitch any more. He did not kick or cuff him idly while he laughed. He was more likely to throw himself on the smaller man and smother him in a fury of anger-driven blows or to throttle him until Vladislaus grew black in the face and bystanders pulled the Russian off.

There was little opportunity for the two men to come together alone, where Cherkoff might have killed Obedaitch in one of his mad rages. To the mine in the morning, back to his shack to sit and brood behind locked door, then to his unkempt bed—that was the life of Vladislaus, his whole life. In months he never took a step, never lifted a hand, never moved but it was a repetition of the same steps, the same movements of the day before and of many days before.

Obedaitch bought a revolver with which to kill his enemy. He sat one night in the doorway of his cabin waiting for Cherkoff to pass as he did every night on his way from the mine to his shack and — Toda. When Cherkoff passed, Vladislaus' heart said "Kill"—but his hand refused. He lacked courage to pull the trigger. And when Cherkoff had gone he hurled the revolver away and went back to his chair, to brood and to nurse his hatred.

There is little doubt that the man grew mad, what with his lonely life, the lack of human companionship, although he lived among thousands, and his overmastering hatred ever gnawing at his brain. He must kill Cherkoff. He must torture Cherkoff. He must make him pay a thousandfold for every blow, for every laugh, for every curse, for every taunt, and a millionfold for the final and greatest wrong! But how?

TO the Irish mine-boss of the Rushford mine, the two hundred odd Slavs who worked for him were less than his mules. The negroes he could under-



From the moment he first saw her standing in the doorway of Vladislaus' cabin, Toda found favor in the masterful eyes of Cherkoff. And from that moment, too, he laid siege to her loyalty.

stand. He had something in common with the Italians under him. He was one of the Welsh and Irish and Americans. But the Hunkeys! They could vote at the union elections like human beings. They could mine coal almost like human beings—if one watched them close enough. But all humanness—and all humanity too—ended there. So he laughed as he put Cherkoff and Obedaitch in the same gallery-gang and ordered them to work together. He had heard, and laughed when he heard, how one had stolen the other's wife.

More than once, as he wrestled with the new-type mining machine that cuts the coal from the veins, or worked with shovel, loading the mine cars, Cherkoff felt something mysterious—and turned to find Obedaitch, his eyes gleaming under the shadow of his miner's lamp, licking his lips like a wolf as he watched.

A thousand plans flashed through Vladislaus' head, every one of them ending in the death of his enemy. A score of times he worked his way nearer Cherkoff, resolved to drive his pick through his head, and a score of times his courage



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failed him. Day after day the grim play went on. One morning on his way to work earlier than usual, Vladislaus met Toda. She was on her way back from the company store where Cherkoff had sent her for chewing tobacco to last him through the day in the mine.

They stopped and stood looking each at the other. Neither knew what to say. Vladislaus was the first to speak.

"Toda, my little Toda," he said in the Ruthenian tongue that both knew. "Why-I never thought you'd be a bad He was silent again and watched her out of fever-bright eyes that frightened her.

"I don't want to be bad. I'm afraid to go to the priest. I'm afraid. He says he will kill me if I leave him. I don't care. I want to die. But you, too! He said he'd kill you too. I don't want to have you killed for a worthless woman. I would kill him but-I'm afraid, I'm afraid. You don't believe I want to be a bad woman, do you, Vaclaw?" She gave him the familiar diminutive of his name.

A roar of rage startled them. Cherkoff was upon them. A back-handed blow knocked Toda backwards, and she scuttled to her prison home. Cherkoff threw himself on Vladislaus, and the latter found courage to meet him as he sprang. But he was helpless as always. Other workmen saved him.

AS he struck doggedly at the coal with his pick that day, while a bare twenty feet away from him Cherkoff worked. Vladislaus made his last resolve. To-day he would kill. To-day he would drive his pick down through that grinning, mocking, hated face and beat it into the black coal. Their fellows drew away from him and Cherkoff, and Vladislaus sidled nearer as he worked. Now he was almost upon Cherkoff and behind him. He gripped his pick for the final rush that would finish all, that would cancel the long, long score he owed. Now he raised his pick-

From far off in the bowels of the mine sounded a dull, booming roar, and then a thump as of a mighty sledge striking the earth. A sudden yell sounded down the gallery. Then came a second, sharper detonation. In the black distance there was a flash, a great blinding light that cut through the billowing clouds of smoke and dust.

The vells became screams, highpitched screams as if women were screaming. There were curses, prayers. All around was the crash of falling rock, of rending, splitting timber as the roof came down. A crash louder than alland the red and yellow and silver and gold flash down the gallery suddenly disappeared. All this in a moment; then silence, heavy silence that seemed to grip one's breath. In Vladislaus' nostrils was the smell of smoke, the feel of dust.

The mine had "blown up."

THE Rushford was an old mine. For forty years they had been taking the black wealth out of its many mouths. Its workings honeycombed a stretch of country six miles across on the surface. No one knew all the galleries and tunnels. Some of them were shown on the blueprints in the mine office, but not all. It was a "slope" mine. That is, the mine mouths sloped down gradually into the earth so that the narrow tracks which bore the cars of coal came clear to the mouth of the mine, instead of to a shaft and elevator as in the newer mines of the district. The mine was "gassy." The miners were constantly breaking in on pockets of fire-damp or carbon monoxide. Gas also seeped through from the abandoned workings of another mine which lav near the Rushford.

The mine was dusty as well. The fans which drove off the impure air and gases and sent down fresh air were old, and half the time one of them was out of commission. The dust was an everpresent danger, worse even than the gas, for when it exploded it burned to death those the explosion did not kill. Because the old mine was a great tinder-box, electricity never had been installed; the mine cars were drawn by mules as they had been forty years before.

Somewhere in the mine, a miner had opened his Davey lamp to light a cigarette. He had opened the doors of hell.

T was four o'clock in the afternoon when the mine "blew up." For miles around, all could see the great cloud of smoke that rose from the main entry and hung like a pall over the fields and hills. They could hear the long, rumbling, intermittent roar as the explosion sought out gallery after gallery. And even while mine officials telephoned and telegraphed for the Federal mine rescue car and crews, and the trained rescue crews among the mine employees above ground rushed to bring out the oxygen helmets, the lung-motors, bandages and oils for burns, the women came.

From the cabins perched on hillside and crest, from those in the little settlements along the valleys, came first the wail that every miner knows so well, sharp, long, quavering, from a hundred throats, the death song of the miner. And on its echoes followed the women.

They came with streaming hair and flapping apron and dress. Some were barefoot. Half-grown children tagged at the heels of many, weeping weakly, falling, climbing up again and clambering onward after their mothers.

Some of the women bore the dishes they had been washing, or brooms. The hands of some were white with flour they had been mixing. They came to watch the bodies of their men brought out of the black hole that gave them livelihood and took their lives.

At the pit mouth they clustered in groups. They clawed at the elbows of every passing mine boss and official, begging each to save their men. Some of them stood sullen-eyed and silent. Some cursed volubly. Some dropped to knees and began telling over beads feverishly.

Suddenly one of the women screamed. She pointed toward the pit mouth. They all turned and looked. A man came staggering out, to fall, face down, in the coal dust, when he was clear of the overhanging roof. After him came others. One woman after another rushed up to the file of blackened figures and threw arms around one and another and shouted with joy. But the file of men was short, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-one—then it stopped. There were at least a hundred and fifty men still in the mine. And at that, only half the regular force had been working.

BY nightfall the rescue crews were on the ground and fighting their way downward. The first crews to venture came back with tales of great barriers of tangled débris—it was hopeless to try to get through. Then they went back with axes and went through.

Later crews came back carrying curious, blackened forms. As each reached open air, the hundreds of women came rushing. One after the other they would look at the tortured face of the dead and then turn away with a sigh of relief or an audible prayer of thanks. But always there was one woman who did not turn away

Then the procession of burden-carriers ceased for a time. Down below, the rescue crews were fighting their way through more barriers.

Fortunately there was little fire. Nearly all that was started by the explosion was smothered for lack of air. There was no general conflagration underground.

About the mouth of the mine were acetylene torches on stakes. Between them passed and repassed groups of helmeted men bearing oxygen tanks on their backs.

On the knolls near by were gathered the women. The wailing was general now. Strangely the piercing, half-savage cries rang through the night, the age-old dirge of the Slavic woman weeping for her man, dead on the field of battle, in the mill or the mine. Some had lighted fires, and their flickering light mingled with the glare of the torches. Order had been restored now, and up and down in front of the mine rode double lines of horsemen, the State constabulary. They herded the women away from the rescue crews.

And now a new note added itself to the cries of the women. It rang like a wolf-howl. It rose and fell, and the women hushed for a moment and shivered at the ill omen. It was Vladislaus' dog. It had gnawed its way from the cabin where it was locked and had come to mourn its master. Wilder and more wolf-like grew its howls. It sat a few rods back from the lines of mounted men and refused to leave or to cease its howls, despite volleys of sticks and stones.

"Fer the love of Mike, kill that dog, wont you? It gives me the willies," one of the mine superintendents said to a

constable. The man drew his gun from his holster and aimed at the dog. Then he put it back.

"There's been too much killin' here

now," he said sentiently.

The mine boss picked up a club and advanced on the dog. The dog only snarled. He struck, but the dog evaded and fled into the darkness.

An idea came into its wolfish mind. Since its master was not coming out of the main entry, and there was the smell of death in the air, it would go over to the Youngstown entry, three miles across the hills. More than once when Vladislaus had failed it here at quitting time, it had found him just leaving by the other entry. So it tucked its tail between . its legs and ran.

II

//LADISLAUS moved an arm. worked. He tried the experiment with the other and then with his legs. They all worked. He sat up. He finally decided that a bump on the head was his

only injury.

The darkness pressed about him like a smothering blanket. He was a man without senses. There was no sense of direction left. There was no sense of hearing, because there was nothing to hear but his own breathing, which soon became inaudible because of long continuance. There was no sense of sight because of the blackness. Feeling there was, but when he had felt all around the irregular walls of the little cage of timber and coal, he was still without any idea of direction and only a very slight perception of the size of the cage. It was small. He had felt Cherkoff's body as he explored, but because Cherkoff lay so very still he had taken it for granted that he was dead.

Now there was a groan. Vladislaus had not groaned - Cherkoff must be alive. Well, he would soon remedy that. His hatred flamed afresh. Soon both would be dead, but he would see to it that Cherkoff was dead first. He felt around until he found a chunk of coal that fitted his hand and crept over to Cherkoff to beat out his brains, to beat in that grinning face.

As he came to Cherkoff's body, how-

ever, he laid his piece of coal down for a moment while he felt about to find if Cherkoff was injured. There was time enough. They would not be disturbed. Cherkoff lav on his back. He seemed uninjured. But wait. Across his legs was a fall of coal. Vladislaus carefully began removing the chunks. Soon all were removed but one larger than the rest. Finally he got this off also. But it had broken Cherkoff's right leg. Cherkoff had become unconscious again. Vladislaus drew the broken body to a level spot and put his coat under the man's head.

He had forgotten his bit of coal. He had forgotten his hatred and his longdeferred vengeance. Here was a man with a broken leg. He must do what he could to help him.

He found a sliver of timber about three feet long. He bound it firmly to the broken leg with strips from his own trousers-leg, so that the ends of the bone

would not grate.

While Cherkoff struggled back to consciousness again Vladislaus reviewed their resources. They were without food. There were scraps in their dinner-pails, probably, but they had eaten in a room off the main gallery. Water? Likely they would have too much of that. The pumps, of course, had stopped, and already Vladislaus could feel a little stream trickling through their cage. Light was impossible even if they had matches.

They were in one of the new and far galleries of the mine, and it might be weeks before rescuers reached them. Well, they would find Cherkoff and him -a trifle worse for the delay. So far as Vladislaus was concerned, he and Cherkoff already were dead. He sat down to wait.

Cherkoff's voice calling for water roused him. He scooped up water in his hand and gave Cherkoff to drink. He explained the situation to the helpless Russian, and ended:

"Two days to wait, I think. Then we

will die." He wished he could smoke.
"Die?" roared the broken-legged man. "You will sit there and die like a dolt? We will get out of here. Fool! Get your pick and dig." It had not occurred to Vladislaus. He had seen mine

of wrecked galleries? It only prolonged the agony. Why not sit down and wait peacefully to die? He told Cherkoff so. Cherkoff nearly wept with rage at the smaller man. He cursed him until he was hoarse. Then he became calmer, and he and Vladislaus began to discuss chances for escape.

Finally they determined the direction of their tunnel and Vladislaus set to work with his pick. Cherkoff lay beside him and with his hands removed the lumps of coal as they were pulled down. It was slow work, because they had to calculate carefully before removing the smallest bit of coal. There was danger of bringing down a fall that

Vladislaus worked until he was exhausted. They had no conception of time, but Vladislaus reckoned by his fatigue that he had worked at least five or six hours. When he had rested a bit, he started again. They slept. When they awoke they began hacking at the barrier of coal.

As they rested they heard a curious squeaking. At first they thought it the squealing of some of the great rats which now and then got down into the



Vladislaus gripped his pick for the final rush that would cancel the long score he owed.

mine. But the squeaks were too prolonged to be those of rats. Suddenly Vladislaus recognized the noise.

"It is my Kula," he shouted. "My

dog. He has come to save us. Kula, Kula," he called. The squeaking became something resembling a bark, faint and far away. They listened. It came from the direction opposite to that in which they had been tunneling.

Now, with fresh courage, they took up the work anew. They worked faster. Occasionally they would stop and Vladislaus would call. They could hear the dog barking. Finally they heard the

dog scratching as it dug.

One minute now, two minutes, three, five—they were through the fall. As he reached for the lumps of coal, Vladislaus could feel the ecstatic tongue of Kula as it licked its master's hands. The dog was whimpering with eagerness and happiness.

At last Vladislaus was through, He reached back and pulled Cherkoff

through the outlet.

Kula's joyful barks changed. They became a snarl as it dived through Vladislaus' restraining hands and drove for Cherkoff's threat. Vladislaus pulled the dog back before it could reach the man, but he had to thrash Kula before the dog gave up its attempts to reach its old enemy. Let his soft-hearted master spare his enemy when he had him in his power, but in Kula's breast there beat no such craven heart. Because they were face to face with death, a thousand feet underground, amid wreckage and flood and death, was no reason why one should not kill when one could-so reasoned Kula. But Vladislaus finally made the dog understand that Cherkoff was to be spared. And Kula started to lead them back.

The timbers of the mine were shattered and splintered. Every few feet there were falls of rock and coal, some large, some small. Kula went first. Then came Vladislaus, on his hands and knees. He had swung the mighty form of Cherkoff over his shoulder and bore him on his back. Slowly Kula picked his way through the chaos through which he had fought before on his journey of rescue.

All was blackness. Great beams blocked their path. They crawled under or over them. Puddles of water were everywhere. In their ears was its ever-

present trickle.

They came to a tangle of timbers and coal blocking their way. Even Kula was puzzled now. When he had come through before, he had crept under. Now the water had risen and there was no way to get through. Vladislaus waded into the pool, took a deep breath and sank beneath the water. He wormed his way through the mud under the timbers. He tried to rise as his lungs threatened to burst. But above him were the timbers holding him down. He crawled on blindly. Air, air-not another second could he keep his mouth closed-one searching hand shot upwards past the timbers into the air. Vladislaus gulped deep of the gaseous, dusty life-giver. Twice more he made the trip through the water under the timbers, once to bring over Cherkoff, again for the dog.

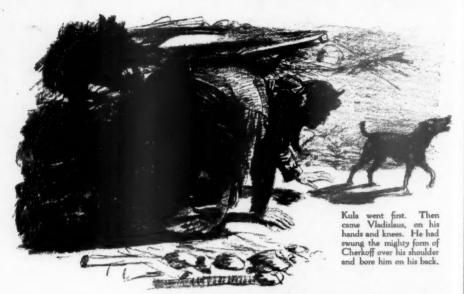
They went on—sometimes over the bodies of men. But the desolation of shattered timbers, fallen rock and lapping water grew less and less. They came at last to the main gallery leading to the Youngstown entry. Once Vladislaus lay down and slept. He did not trouble to take Cherkoff from his back. He just sank on his face and slept as a bit of rock lifted them out of the water.

On again. Years afterward, it seemed, Kula barked and Vladislaus lifted his dull eyes. The Youngstown entry had been sloped straight into the hills for nearly a mile. There, ahead, was a faint

gleam. Light! Life!

But even with freedom in sight, Vladislaus felt himself weakening. He could carry Cherkoff no longer. It was not needful now. He would lay him down, crawl to the entry and send back scores of strong rescuers to bring out the Russian. He laid him down. Cherkoff was unconscious. Vladislaus crawled on. In his eyes was the glimmer of light far ahead. Kula dropped behind.

K ULA sniffed at Cherkoff's form. His master was far ahead now, still crawling. Cherkoff groaned and rolled over. He was coming back to life. Kula, frightened, darted back. Cherkoff raised himself to his hands and knee, the other leg dragging behind. Ahead, he too saw the light. He knew nothing of Vladislaus' plans to bring help. He began to crawl. Life was waiting, life, and the



strong, burning liquor of the coal-mining towns—and Toda. He crawled on, splashing on through the puddles of water.

Came the rush of a furry form, driving for his throat. It was Kula, intent, now as ever, upon wiping out his ancient hatred. Cherkoff sat back and hurled coal-lumps at the dog. Kula retreated. Cherkoff went on. Kula returned to the attack, then fled at the volley of coal.

So it went. Once Cherkoff hit Kula with a lump of coal as big as his hand. Kula rolled over. Thereafter he dragged one leg as Cherkoff did—but he drove for the man's throat whenever the man turned to crawl. Cherkoff wept with rage as this hell-beast with the hot eyes worried him. Already his shoulders were bleeding. His clothes were in strips about his breast and arms and legs. So far he had saved his throat.

The water was a bit deeper here. It grew still deeper, so that Cherkoff had to hold his head high as he crawled to keep his mouth out of water. Something swam beside him. He turned to see Kula's eyes glaring into his own. He pushed the dog under water. But with the exertion his own head went under. He let the dog go, to place his hand on the bottom again to hold his nose above the water. Kula came up too—close beside Cherkoff. The dog drove

for Cherkoff's throat—reached it. Dog and man went under water. The water foamed. An arm flashed out, and down again. A man's leg was thrown up. To it was fastened a splinter of timber, bound around with strips of cloth. The leg went under. The water was still.

THE rescuers were devoting all their attention to the main entry of the mine. It was a group of fellow miners who found Vladislaus at the Youngstown entry. It was the third day after the explosion. He told them of Cherkoff, told them where he lay. They went down to bring him out. They found him. One of them stumbled over him as he waded the pool of water. Under his body was that of Kula. The dog's teeth were still locked deep in Cherkoff's throat.

Toda came running from Cherkoff's cottage to that of Vladislaus as soon as she heard he had been rescued. She ran to the company store for a bit of meat and put it on for broth. Then she started to wash up the neglected dishes, after first washing Vladislaus and binding up his bruises.

Neither of them ever referred to Cherkoff. As soon as the mine was cleaned out Vladislaus went back to work. At evening, when he came home, there was always Toda to greet him. UPERT HUGHES, forceful writer of life as it is lived to-day in this country, is giving, in "The Thirteenth Commandment," a brilliant picture of the average American spending his last dollar—or going into debt—to procure the luxuries of millionaires.

Daphne Kip belongs to a representative American family, straining to make appearances. She is a fresh, April-day sort of girl. Clay Wimburn, her lover, who has a good position with a New York house and a "bright future," goes into debt to buy Daphne's engagement

The Kips live in Cleveland. So Daphne must buy her trousseau in New York. Her father puts a second mortgage on some property to furnish the money. Daphne and her mother live in the expensive apartment of Bayard Kip, Daphne's brother, while in New York, as Bayard is in Europe on a honeymoon with his beautiful bride Leila, whom he has won in a race with Tom Duane, wealthy

New York clubman.
Wimburn lunches
and dines Daphne
at the finest hotels,
gives theater parties,
and they motor everywhere. It is not till
the delighted girl suggests they look for an
apartment like her
brother's that she gets
the first peep at the
modern enemy of love.
They can't afford
twenty-five hundred a

year for lodging.

Wimburn takes
Daphne to supper at the Claremont one
night. It is two days to his pay-day, and
he figures he can just make it. Daphne
wants a certain seat. By mistake Wimburn tips the head waiter five dollars to
get it. When the check comes, he is staggered. They have given him melon costing seventy-five cents the portion more
than the kind he had ordered. He cannot tip the waiter. Daphne is near tears.
In his embarrassment Wimburn lets

In his embarrassment Wimburn lets Daphne know that his bank-account is also wiped out. She is sick as she sees stretching out before her the kind of penny-fighting existence she always has hated so in her own home.

At the apartment, Bayard Kip himself opens the door.

"Money gave out, so we had to come home." laughs Kip. "What's the good word?"

"Lend me five dollars," replies Wimburn.

Next morning at breakfast Daphne sees the funeral of a modern honeymoon. Her brother reads the newspaper and is eager to rush to his office. His wife finds herself only a little piece of his world after his fervid protestations that she is everything to him.

EILA takes a hand at Daphne's shopping. She finds "gowns just made for them" at two hundred and seventy-five dollars each. She has both charged to her husband. Bayard is enraged at their extravagance. Daphne turns on him and tells him she will not only send the gown back but that she will never again take anything from any man. And when Wimburn comes, she hands him his ring.

"What have I done?" he asks.
"Nothing. Neither have I. But I'm going to do something."

Daphne's first hard lesson comes when she asks Tom Duane to help her get a stage position. Duane tries to make love to her, but is repulsed. He gets her a position as understudy to a popular actress.

Complete

Novel

Résumé of the

Previous Chapters

of Rupert Hughes'

New

Daphne takes lodgings with a quiet, economical family named Chivvis. She works hard, gets the opportunity to play the star's part one night—and fails signally. Wimburn is absent in her hour of unhappi-ness, and Duane is on hand. He soothes her and proposes supper at the Claremont. She accepts. In the meantime Leila has conciliated Bayard, who has

gone into debt to give her a necklace and bank-account of five hundred dollars as peace offerings. Leila has also become jealous of Duane's attention to Daphne.

Duane's supper party is a tantalizing display of power and luxury. Daphne feels the lure of it till he again tries to play the rôle of lover. Then she shrinks from him and decides not to see him any more

Now Daphne's thoughts return to Wimburn. She calls him up, and their courtship becomes more ardent than before. While the Chivvis family is away on a vacation, they are together continually till the danger in the closeness of their relationship alarms them and they decide to marry at once. But times are growing worse. Wimburn's salary is cut in half, and Daphne begins again her endeavors to find work that she can do.

The THIRTEENTH

CHAPTER XXXVII

N melodrama the villain uses all his wile to lure the heroine into some secluded spotaboard a lugger, to the abandoned old mill, or some such place where she is almost as frightened as the audience is, until the hero appears in time to thwart the hellish purpose of the knave, rescue the girl from danger and bring down the curtain in triumph.

In real life the true danger begins when the curtain falls and the hero and heroine are left together without even a villain for chaperon. Heavenish purposes do not assure heavenly results. Hero and heroine are mutually perilous; and the more they love each other, the

more grave is their hazard.

And then, too, hero and heroine are getting married later and later in life. In some of our States the average woman used to marry at the age of twenty, but does not marry now till she is twentyfour. That four years is a long, long time to hold impetuous youth in abey-

Of course marriage itself is one of the most desperate risks of existence, but it lacks the torment and the fraying of suspense. The lovers are permitted to enter the laboratory and put their souls to the test. They live together, grow acquainted with the varied selves of each other; they face the world and its money and its

problems.

In other times and climes, those who were to wed have been kept from the sight of each other till the ceremony itself. Marriage by parental management has its curses, but they do not include the torment of our civilization, which sends fiancé and fiancée through the trial by ordeal, demands that they walk over hot ploughshares with unscorched feet.

But this commonplace is one of the many that novelists seldom talk about. They leave such dramas to the stories of the olden saints who resisted their devils and were canonized. The saints and sinners of our day have the martyr-

dom without the crown.



JAMES ILLUSTRATED

DAPHNE KIP and Clay Wimburn were commonplace. They had loved in haste and honorably, and had rapturously made ready for marriage. She had honorably and wisely and with intelligent love decided that the money poison should be kept out of their life or prepared against as well as possible. She had tried to pay her half of the expenses in the only way a modern wife can really pay her way. There is much foolish and futile protest against the nowadays woman who goes into business outside her home. But the fact is that it was her business that began it. Her business left the home, and she is merely following it to the places where new conditions and inventions have centralized and mechanized it.

They have taken her distaff and her washtub and her cookery and gossip into the woolen mills and steam laundries and restaurants and telephone exchanges. She has had to go thither to do her necessary work. Even the entertainers, the singers, dancers, tellers of stories, who used to stir the seraglios and the castle halls, have been gathered into opera houses, theaters and vaudeville and moving-picture palaces.

Daphne, having no gifts for spinning, cooking or laundry, tried to enter the theatrical life. Her old-fashioned lover protested, and she went anyway. But she was not suited to the stage, and she

COMMANDMENT

A novel of a girl's adventures with life in the busy years of 1914 and 1915

By Rupert Hughes

Author of "What Will People Say?" and "Empty Pockets"

MONTGOMERY FLAGG

retreated with nothing to show for her expedition except her shattered pride and a fifty-doilar check in lieu of two weeks' notice.

Clay had saved nothing against the rainy season. He had found his salary too small for his courtship requisites; now that his salary was halved, his courtship had to be reduced to the minimum of expense.

It was midsummer and hot, and the town was morose and torpid of evenings. Clay could not get away to the mountains or the cool shores, and Daphne would not leave town without him. She remembered too well the sirens that stayed in the city. She could not forget the caravan of flesh she had seen at the Winter Garden.

Now and then she and Clay would go to the nearer beaches for a Saturday afternoon or a Sunday, but the very ocean was crowded, and the trains to and from were stuffed with tired and sweaty people, with lovers whose antics made romance as repulsive as its fruition was rendered appalling by quarrelsome husbands, nagging wives and sticky children. The misery of getting home annulled what pleasure they had taken from ocean waves or forest murmurs.

Bayard and Leila had more money to spend and made ambitious escapes, but Daphne and Clay must swelter with the other stay-at-home millions, Clay denied 'himself even the two weeks' vacation allotted to him. Bayard took his, however, and carried Leila off to Newport, where they boarded humbly if expensively. Bayard would have preferred to rough it in the Canadian woods and fight muskalonge, but Leila had all her Paris clothes to display, and she argued that it was poor economy to leave them in the trunks, since they were already paid for. Bayard smiled at her quaint finance, but yielded as usual. While they were gone, at their suggestion, Daphne moved down into their apartment. It was large and beautiful and, as Clay said, it was "not infested with Chivvises." Evening after evening she and Clay sat at the windows and watched the doldrums of the crowdless streets.

Usually there was a cool breeze at Bayard's lofty windows, and after the hot days it was such a comfort just not to be flailed by the sun that Clay and Daphne felt no restlessness. If that had only been their own nest, and they married, they would have been content—or so they told themselves. They talked of the future to encourage them through the present.

Now and then Clay quarreled with Daphne because of her obstinate determination to have a trade of her own. Then they made up-and quarreled anew: lovers' quarrels like summer storms that break the sultry tension of the air, and make peace endurable. They loved each other ardently and after the custom of their nation accepted their betrothal as a full franchise for blandishments. They were young and well mated and inflammable, and they kept close to the fire. Their instincts were aware only that they were marriageable; their instincts were impatient of too protracted or too informal a courtship. Their long communions were agonizing duels between nerves and intelligence.

There was no one to see them or forbid them; only the habit of propriety, the dread of the community, the rights of the unborn, the dim tacit claims of society.

The remembrance of that evening

when they had danced together alone, and Daphne had forgotten all her religions, still filled her with remorse for what she had almost become. Her lover had been just strong enough then to redeem them both from the edge of the abyss. But there came a time when his strength did not suffice. And then it chanced that she was enabled to be less weak than he. Then it was his turn to shudder with remorse, and to bless her for being good. He whispered abjectedly: "I am a beast and you are an angel."

Her wish to be utterly honest with him

forced her to confess:

"I'm everything but an angel." I'm not good. I didn't want to be good. But all of a sudden I was afraid. That's all; just afraid! I must—I must—I just must be wise, honey. And you've got to help me, for it is so dangerous to be a woman.... I seemed to see my father's, face. He was terribly sad. He seemed to shake his head and beg me to be a good girl."

She covered her eyes with her hands. "Mamma might forgive me, because she'd understand—being a woman; or she might refuse to forgive me, because she understood. I don't know how she would act. Daddy, though, would forgive me, I know, without understanding. But he would suffer; he would be all bewildered and beaten down. He'd blame himself for letting me leave home.

"When he came to town that time and I met him at the station and we had breakfast together, and I told him I was going to live alone in New York, he was terribly afraid that somebody might insult me-some strange man. He tried to tell me, but he was so bashful he couldn't. I knew what he meant, and it scared him and shocked him even to see that I knew such things. I told him there was no danger, and he seemed to trust me. I mustn't go back on his trust. I wish I had a photograph of him. He hasn't had one taken for years and years. It would help me, for I've been in frightful danger. I am in danger now."

"And not from a strange man," Clay groaned, "but from me. I was the one

that insulted you."

"No, honey, you didn't insult me; you

just loved me too much. You mustn't. I'm not good enough to be loved so much. But I must be good. That's the most important thing on earth for anybody to be, isn't it?—just good."

He said amen to that, and they bowed to the missing commandment which was strangely omitted from the Ten—the great Thou-shalt-not for the young and unwed. It would be the Twelfth.

And so they agreed that they must take care of each other's souls. They would be very circumspect, and formal. It is thus that little children sometimes conspire in behalf of righteousness and band together for nobility. Perhaps it is best that youth should be trusted, since those who are ill inclined can manufacture opportunities under the very eyes of jealousy.

The next evening they took the Chivvises to a moving-picture show at the Little Circle Theater. And the evening after that each pretended an-

other engagement.

Daphne began anew to hunt for work—work, the thrice-blessing that kills time and makes money and tames passion. But the world seemed to be full of every trouble except work. Had she been skilled it would have availed her little, since skilled laborers were being turned off by the thousands. And unskilled laborers were being turned off by the tens of thousands.

Daphne could do nothing but look about and read advertisements and find that none of them fitted her needs, or she fitted none of theirs. After a day of frustrated ambitions and wasted energies, the evening would bring her lover. He would come up from an office where there had been little to do except discuss the latest failure in business, the most recent slump in railroad or other securities, and the increasing stagnation of trade.

And then Bayard came back, alone.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

EILA had decided that it was better for her health to stay at Newport till the cooler weather came and her summer wardrobe had been worn out.

So Bayard joined the army of townbound husbands, the summer widowers. He went back once a week on furlough to spend a Newport Sabbath with his wife. He became one of the Fridaynight-to-Monday-morning excursionists. There was leisure enough in his office.

He insisted on Daphne's keeping her room in his apartment, and of evenings he affixed himself to her and Clay and made their company a crowd. But they welcomed him as a chaperon of a sort. Also, he paid his way with liberality, except for occasional spasms of retrenchment, when he economized atrociously. He predicted that good times would never come again. The whole world had gone to pot, and would never come out.

Suddenly he changed his tune; suddenly the whisper went about that hard times were ending. It had been incessantly shouted that good times were returning or had never left, but that was simply hallooing to keep up the courage. Now those in authority began to whisper to one another slyly. The shrewd began to sniff the air and foresmell the soft chinook that melts the snows—and incidentally shovels the avalanches down the mountainsides.

The stock market ceased to despond. The prices that had fallen and fallen for no particular reason, bounded up for no particular reason. They fell back, but rose again. They showed an inclination to return from the depths to the surface. As prices rose, the trading increased. Previously a busy day had always been a day of disaster; now the public began to glance again at Wall Street. Investors were about to visit market. Brokers who had boasted of the pettiness of their trade began to boast of its improvement. Their commissions were still picayune; thousands of clerks were still out of employment, and the rest were kept on as a charity, but the Street had endured so long a drought that a cloud the size of a man's hand was accepted as proof of a deluge of fat rain.

Bayard was no longer a silent and morose companion of Daphne and Clay. He began to talk big talk:

"I tell you, the market has struck bottom. Prices have got no place to go but up. I don't believe in speculating, but—well, after all, Wall Street is the barometer of the nation. You can't stop a storm by throwing away the barometer. But you can foretell one by watching it. The man who buys now and holds on is going to come out rich. It's a time to pyramid. If I weren't absolutely opposed to speculation, I'd go down to the Street and buy everything I could lay my hands on, and watch it soar."

A little later he had forgotten that he was opposed to speculation. He quoted prices as if they were epigrams. Railroad and industrial shares assumed a personality. They were like heroes battling for life. When he saw some stock that he had wished to buy, but had not bought, go up a point, he felt as if he had suffered a personal loss. When a stock that he favored went down, he forgot to credit it as money saved.

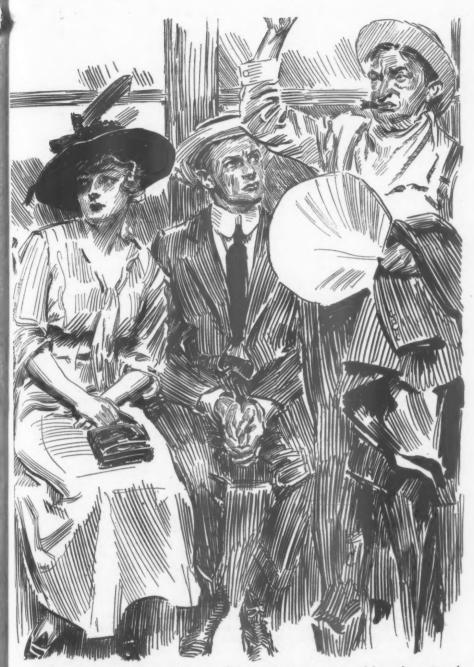
In his bachelor days, when Bayard-was growing in commercial stature like a young giant, he had regarded his business with all the warmth of a poet. His office-building was his Acropolis and his office the peculiar temple of his muse; and her name was Profit. He thrilled like a poet to the epic inspiration of a big sale, and he knew a joy akin to the poet's precise revision of his scansion if he devised a scheme for reducing overhead charge or reducing wastage.

It was thus that he had made himself important enough to advance rapidly in his firm. And he had put a large share of his salary every week into a savings bank. With his extra commissions and bits of unexpected luck he had bought securities of impregnable value. These he had locked away in a safe deposit vault. They paid him only four or five per cent, but they were as sure as anything mundane, and twice a year they granted him the lofty emotion of the coupon-cutter. He had paid cash for what merchandise he bought and demanded special discounts for it. In time the many littles made a mickle. He had five thousand dollars' worth of bonds in his safe deposit box.

And then he married—pawned himself at the marriage-shop. He kept this hoard a secret from Leila. He had planned to add to it regularly and sur-



Now and then Daphne and Clay would go to the nearer beaches for a Saturday afternoon or a Sunday, but the very romance as repulsive as its fruition was rendered appalling by quarrelsome husbands, nagging wives and sticky



ocean was crowded, and the trains to and from were stuffed with tired and sweaty people, with lovers whose antics made children. The misery of getting home annulled what pleasure they had taken from ocean waves or forest murmurs.

prise her some day with his wealth. But somehow, after his marriage, he never went marketing again for securities; he had no cash to pay; he caught the plague of charging things. Once or twice he even went to the vault and took forth the long, slim, flat bonds, and planned to put them up as security for loans, to pay bills with. But he had shaken his head over them and laid them back and let his creditors walk the floor. He had resisted this temptation and his hoard was intact, though his debts increased.

Now he saw a chance to use the talents that he had buried in a napkin. He was glad that Leila was in Newport. She was costly at a distance, but she left him free to give his mind to his work. One loving letter a day and an occasional telegram absolved him of his duty. The rest of

the time belonged to finance.

He filled the ears of Clay and Daphne with his market jargon. He was as unintelligible to Daphne as a mad Scot

talking golfese.

"Look at Q. & O.," he would say, "-sold at 85 a year ago. Friend of mine bought it. People who were in the know said it was going up. It ought to have gone up but it didn't. Dropped slowly and sickeningly to 43. To-day it is 46. If I had gone into the market the other day with five thousand dollars and snapped it up at 43, I'd have cleaned up nearly three hundred and a half in no time. If I bought now at 46, I'd get 108 shares for my five thousand. If I held on till the price got back to 85, as it's bound to, I'd have over nine thousand dollars, nearly a hundred per cent, and it would probably go on up, perhaps to 200. That's bad, eh?"

"First catch your five thousand dol-

lars," said Clay.
"I've caught it," said Bayard. "I've

had it all along."
"You have?" Clay groaned. "If I'd known that, I'd have borrowed it to get married on."

"Oh, would you?" Bayard grinned. "To get married on? Not much!" It was well that Leila did not see that cynic grin. "And what collateral would you have offered me?"

"Daphne," said Clay. "She's a col-

lateral relation of yours."

"That's why he wouldn't accept me assecurity," said Daphne.

They all laughed furiously at the brilliant tennis of their repartee. It is very cheering to be cracking jokes about dollars. Almost anything is a good joke in their presence, and almost nothing in their absence.

"Joking aside," said Clay (he was a well-meaning young man but he was one of those who say, "Joking aside"), "will you lend me enough for Daphne

and me to get married on?"

"Not in a million years," said Bayard. "When I've made a killing with this money, I'll make you all a present, but you couldn't pry this out of me with a crowbar. I wish I knew where to borrow more. If you can raise any money, Clay, don't you spend it on matrimony. A fellow can get married any time, but it's only once in ten years that you can climb aboard a market after a panic and ride in with the tide."

Clay and Daphne thought that Bayard was a Shylock and told him so, but they could not wheedle his money from him

for all their pounds of flesh.

He went to his safe deposit vault, took out his bonds, carried them to the vicepresident of his bank and borrowed all that he could raise on the securities. The bonds had fallen below par on account of the depression, but Bayard was granted eighty per cent of their face value, minus thirty days' discount at five per cent.

His anemic bank-account was suddenly swollen by three thousand, nine hundred and seventy-nine dollars and

eighteen cents.

He sought out a broker, a college friend whom he could trust, to advise him honestly. They conferred on the stocks to buy. The old dilemma could not be escaped: those that offered the most profit offered the most risk. To buy on margins was further danger, with promise of further profit.

After all, Bayard felt, to buy outright, however wise, was tame. Even if he doubled his money, he would have only eight thousand in place of his four.

If he put up his entire funds as a tenpoint margin, a swift rise in stocks would multiply his money indefinitely. The Napoleons were the men who knew when to strike and struck hard. Bayard did not chance to reflect that Napoleon went from Elba to Waterloo after a brief vacation. He did not remember what an unlucky word Napoleon is in Wall Street. He resolved to be another of those young Napoleons.

The question of what to bet on was a thrilling one, requiring a long warcouncil, but at length the disposition was made and he gave his broker the com-

mand to go forward.

The dealings on the exchange were so small that even Bayard's money made an audible clink as it struck the ledge. In those dull days, when the brokers earned a precarious existence by taking in each other's stock washing, Bayard's appearance advertised that there was a hint of life in certain quarters. The traders might as well boost those stocks as any others. Bayard's stocks began to sell, to creep up an eighth and a quarter. One of them rose two points, fell back one, and rallied by the close to a gain of 13%. Another reversed the process.

Bayard, reading his Wall Street edition, turned to the final quotations with trembling anxiety. The vision of that "+13%" opposite one of his stocks sent him so high in the clouds that he could hardly see the "-13%" opposite another.

He had been caught by the most thrilling of serial stories, published daily and written by a host of unconscious collaborators.

He strutted when he met Daphne and Clay that evening and insisted on dining, wining and theatring them. He was so proud of himself that he telegraphed Leila a bouquet of flowers.

Business at the factory was slumping to a collapse, but Bayard felt that its future was certain: he said that Wall Street was always six months ahead of the times. Six months later, business would begin to boom. He would let his office work slumber and devote himself to the Street.

The market crept up and up. Bayard turned his profits back into his new business. He was growing rich. He was planning works of lavish charity; works of art; the purchase of a great reserve fund of securities.

Clay once more offered to relieve him of enough of his wealth to marry Daphne on. But Bayard said:

"Nope! I'm sorry to seem such a tightwad, but 'Business First' is my motto. As soon as I clean up a bit of real money, I'm going to put Mother in a position of independence, so that she will never have to ask poor old Dad for anything again. That will save them both a lot of suffering and cut down the output of hard words. Then I'm going to make Dad a big cash present. I've got to do those things before I get round to Daphne and you. If I hit it big, I'll stake you to the handsomest wedding Saint Thomas' ever saw."

But Daphne and Clay did not want a handsome wedding. They wanted merely to be married.

SOME years before, when President Taft was inaugurated, every omen was fine. The Weather Bureau promised fair weather. There was not a hint of storm anywhere upon the continent. And then a blizzard "backed in" from the ocean and played havoc.

So upon this era of good feeling and democratic equality and civilized peace, the European war backed in from nowhere. Nobody expected it; hardly anybody believed it, in spite of the multitudinous tragedies it brought down in torrents.

A young man from Serbia shot a grand duke in Austria, and the world heard of Sarajevo for the first time, but not the last. The bullet that slew the Austrian heir multiplied itself as by magic into billions of missiles. A young shoemaker from Bavaria, to his great surprise, killed an old Belgian schoolteacher, who fell into a ditch still clasping his umbrella. They were only two among thousands.

Refugees in hordes filled the woods with a new Pharaonic exodus. Herod might have been hunting down the innocents again.

The peaceful Belgian army, suddenly leaping to defend its borders, was shattered and the fragments driven with their king into another nation. Steel-capped fortresses were knocked to flinders. Churches and cathedrals were splintered with unheard-of artillery.

Whosesoever the blame, the world devoted itself to waging or watching the most vicious, most inexcusable, most destructive war in human record.

With the moral cataclysm went a financial earthquake. The European exchanges flung their doors shut. The American exchanges tried to keep the shop-windows open, but had to close them down. Bayard Kip was among the first casualties. Before he could put in a stop-order, his margins were gone. Q. & O. shot down from 48 to 31. Bayard had said that prices could go no lower, having struck bottom. Now the bottom itself was knocked out.

Prices stopped falling at last because of the closing of the markets. Europe established a legal moratorium. America established one of sentiment. Everybody owed somebody else, and everybody gave

tolerance because he needed it.

Night fell on the commercial world, a night illumined by horrors unknown before. Europe was one Pompeii. Agonies grew so numerous and so enormous that people ceased almost to feel them. Individuals still complained of toothache and of bad cooking, of rain and heat and of small tips. Yet there was unheard-of charity while America floundered in quicksands of financial uncertainty.

Bayard's factory could not meet even its diminished pay-roll. The president of the concern could not borrow a penny at the bank of which he was a director. The factory shut down, and jettisoned all its workmen into the mobs of unemployed; the office forces were reduced to a minimum and the salaries of the minimum further reduced. Clay was thrown out of even his half-job, and Bayard was put

on half-pay.

Bayard was dazed at the mockery of his wisdom, the sudden ruin of his slow-built fortune. The war was one of the accidents that make vanity of all theories and dignities and prides. In the big gambling-house of the Universe the plans of the wisest are hardly more certain than "systems" built up to break the bank at Monte Carlo.

The one thing that lightened Bayard's shame and terror was the fact that all the world was aghast and afraid. Greater

fortunes and minds than his had been wrecked.

Bayard's sober thoughts concerned themselves with extricating himself from the wreckage. It was not possible to debarrass himself of everything. He could not give up his expensive apartment; it was leased for a year and a half more. He could not dismiss his expensive wife: she was leased for ninety-nine years. He could not give up his character, his costly tastes, his zeal for "front," the maintenance of a good façade. The instinct of lovable bluff was seen in his telegram to Leila. He wanted her at home to comfort him, now that he had no business for her to hamper. Besides, he could not afford to keep her at Newport. Out of his ominously small funds he telegraphed her a liberal sum to pay her bills and her carfare and parlor carfare. She telegraphed in answer that her trunks had all been packed when she got his message and she would be on the first train. He met her and found her astonishingly beautiful in her millionaire uniform.

He felt like the pauper who received a white elephant for a present. But she was gorgeous in her trappings. They embraced with mutual approval. He

laughed:

"I was going to begin economy by cutting out the taxi business, but I couldn't carry a Cleopatra like you in the subway. You look like all the money in the world. And you're worth it."

In the taxicab he crushed her to him again in a dismal ecstasy and sighed gayly: "You're too grand for me, honey. I'm busted higher than a kite. You didn't bring home any change, of

course?"

"I did better than that," she beamed, and, being married to him, made no bones about bending and disclosing one entire silk stocking most elegantly repleted. It was transparent, translucent, indeed, like gossamer over marble, and of a sapling symmetry except for one unsightly knob which she deftly removed, and placed in Bayard's hand.

He did not need to glance at his palm to tell that it was full of bank-notes.

"What's all this?" he said. And she, prim and proper again, chortled:

As usus more



As usual, it was Wesley who found a shabby comfort in the situation—found it for his son. "Don't you think anything more about it, my boy. I'm kind of relieved. I been so ashamed at traipsin' over here to bother you, instead of rushin' over to help you like I ought to—being your father—that I'm kind of glad you can't do it. I got no right to add to your troubles. I'm supposed to take care of you." This cracked Bayard's pride completely. A sob broke from him, and others followed in ugly, awkward succession. Men do not know how to cry.

"That's the money you telegraphed me to pay my bills with."

'But—"

"This is no time to pay bills."

"You're a genius," he said. And she was, of a sort.

When they were at home again, he told her of his ruinous speculations. She did not reproach him. She was gambler enough to thrill at the high chance, and sportswoman enough not to blame him

for losing his stakes.

"Don't you worry!" she said from his lap as from a dais. "We'll be rich yet. And you mustn't imagine anything else. There's everything in thinking a thing is going to happen. I'm too sensitive to be a Christian Scientist about pain, but I am one about good luck. You must just tell yourself that you're going to come

out all right, and you will.

"And we must keep up appearances so that other people will believe in us. It's the only way, too, to keep your credit good. I learned that at Newport. People who are people up there never pay their bills. That's why they get trusted everywhere, and have plenty of cash. Their creditors don't dare insult 'em or sue 'em. The only people who get sued are the poor little dubs that pay cash most of the time and then ask to be trusted when they're hard up.

"This old war will blow over in a little while, and you'll be on the crest of the wave if you'll only stay there. That's where we must keep, honey, right on the crest of the wave. It will carry you along itself, but once you get caught in

the undertow, you're gone. I'm right; I know I am. Don't you see?"

He said she was. And of course there was a worldly truth and a Satanic wisdom in her creed. In that subversion of all standards the cautious soul was in as much danger as the reckless. The ship of civilization was like the torpedoed Lusitania, crashing through the sea on the momentum of its disabled engines, with its decks a-tilt and awash, its lifeboats smashed or out of reach, and panic everywhere. The reckless and the ruthless stood perhaps a better chance than the altruists and the schemers.

It was the hour of triumph for the Leilan school. It was enough to turn an orthodox financier into an atheist toward the great God Mammon.

Bayard had rebuked Leila for spending money on clothes and on amusements. But she had had the fun; she still had the clothes; and where were the fruits of his years of self-denial? Where were his hoarded earnings? His few bonds were irredeemably in pawn. And on the roads of Belgium and East Prussia myriads of wretches who had kept thrift and builded them houses were staggering along in hungry penury, fugitive from shattered homes and wondering after the next day's bread.

CHAPTER XXXIX .

AYARD tried Leila's recipe for a time, but there were expenses that he could not charge, and even the wad of money she had smuggled out of Newport did not last long. Other people were no more willing to pay bills than he. Moneys that were owed to him he could not collect. He could not respond to the multitudinous appeals for charity. This was a real shame in times of such frantic needs. He could not do any of the honorable pleasant things that one can do with money. He had to do many of the dishonorable loathsome things one must do without money.

He pocketed his pride and appealed to wealthy friends for loans, but usually all that he pocketed was his pride. The time came when even the universal patience began to give out. Far-sighted people who had invested their money were left stranded when dividends were passed. Those who had money to sparewere afraid of their to-morrows. Asking a man for a loan was like asking a man in a theater fire to step back and let you

nass

In his desperation, Bayard's thoughts reverted to his original rescuer, his father. He had never appealed to the old man in vain. Bayard had often promised himself the delight of sending home a big check as an installment on his venerable debt. But it was a promise easy to defer, in the face of all the other temptations and opportunities. His father never pressed him, never expected

a return of the money he had been investing in the boy. For a child is a piece of furniture bought on the installment plan to go in somebody's else house as soon as it is paid for.

Bayard put off the appeal to his father as long as he dared, but at last he sat

down to the hateful letter.

He began with wise remarks on the war and its undoubted brevity, since the expenses were such that no nation could or would meet them long. He spoke of the temporary closing of his factory, but emphasized its splendid prospects when the war should be over. He admitted that he had been extravagant and luxurious beyond his means, but he had learned his lesson, he said, and he would never again put his whole resources in jeopardy. As he wrote the words never again he frowned to think what a byword they had become. The very music halls and the cartoonists had educated people to realize that he who says "Never again" will soon say it again.

He hated to trouble his poor old Dad at such a time (he wrote with truth), but his very life depended on raising some immediate money. He was young and husky and he would be on his feet in a jiffy. He would pay back every cent in a short while, even if he had to borrow it of some one else. But in a few weeks the panicky conditions would be ended and business would surely return to the

normal.

He knew that "Old Reliable Kip" could perform his usual miracle and get blood from some of those Cleveland turnips, and he was so sure of his father that he ended his letter with an advance payment of thanks. This was the first payment he had made in advance for a long time.

He liked his argument so well and was so cheered by its logic that he gave the letter to Daphne to read. She was less impressed by the letter than by her vision of the addressee. Her eyes filled with tears at thought of him. She saw

him better through tears.

"Dear old Dad, he never failed us yet. He never will. Thank heaven, I didn't buy my trousseau. He can give you that money."

She was tasting for almost the first

time the delicious sensation of enjoying money that has not been spent. She thought of another stimulant for her father.

"You'd better add a postscript saying that my prospects for a job are fine,"

she said.

"At what?" Bayard grunted.

"I don't know yet. There were several I could have had, but I was very choose-y because it wasn't absolutely necessary for me to take them. Thank heaven, it hasn't been a matter of starve or—sin, as it is with so many poor women."

Bayard threw her a glance of amazement. It was strange language from her to him. The thought had never entered his mind that his sister could debate such a problem. Suddenly he had a vision of the entire possibility of the alternative. Thousands of other sisters had been forced to the decision. If he and his father and Clay failed Daphne, what recourse had she, seeing that she had been raised to no trade?

Bayard had another hideous vision of the possible; what if he failed Leila and her father went to smash as he was always about to do?—what would become of her, with her luxurious necessities and

her reckless beauty?

Money! He must get money—a lot of it at once, enough to live on and a big reserve. He swore to himself that he would never again risk his savings. And once more that "Never again!" mocked him like a ribald echo. His father must come to his aid. Must was so urgent that it became would.

He sealed the letter and put a special delivery stamp on it and took it to a branch post office so that it would reach Cleveland without fail, the next morning.

When he got back to the house, there was a telegram from home.

Leaving beaver due tomorrow A. M. don't meet me, but be home. must see you important mamma well love Father.

Leila had already opened the telegram and called Daphne down from her room in the Chivvis apartment. Daphne read it and said:

"Eighteen words! He must be distracted about something!"



Leila had often consoled herself with the thought of her jewels as a final refuge, but she had put off the evil day. Now "I couldn't help hearing what you were saying. You needn't be down-hearted, though, for I've just thought ecstary. "My rings!" she cried. "My diamonds and rubies! And I've got a necklace or two and

she felt of a way some ch



she felt that the time had come. She threw open the door and spoke into the gloom with a voice of seraphic beauty:
of a way to help Daddy out." Bayard and Wesley stated at her in amazement. Leila went on in a kind of
some chains and brooches. They're worth a lot of money. And you're welcome to 'em, Daddy."

CHAPTER XL

HE next morning Bayard rose betimes to meet his father at the train. And Daphne went to the Grand Central Station with him. She remembered the previous occasion when in her restless ambition to conquer New York she had met him there with glib promises. She had insisted on paying his way. She had been a trifle ashamed of his shabby ways and his efforts to grind his tips exceeding small.

Now she was there without a success to her name. Her best hope was that he had squeezed his pennies so tight that enough of them remained to save Bayard from poverty and herself from a humbled return home.

Just one thing quickened her with pride. He had been worried about her soul and she had smiled at his needless alarms. Now she knew that his alarm had not been needless. Her soul had been tried, tortured on a rack of inquisitional temptations. She had escaped, not without risk, not altogether of her own volition, not without regrets; but she had escaped. She could meet her father's eye with pride of victory if not of ignorance. That was worth all the harrowing self-denials.

She ran to her father and flung her arms about him, and Bayard hugged him and carried his suit-case for him. It was no time to be tipping a porter—nor to be making use of taxicabs with the subway at hand. Bayard lugged his father's suit-case along Fifty-ninth Street. The hallboy, who had not been tipped for some days, observed a strict

neutrality.

Somehow these economics of Bayard's did not seem to reassure Wesley as they once would have done. But Bayard and Daphne had agreed not to talk trouble till after breakfast. Leila was a radiant hostess, and they all made as much of a hero of the old veteran as they could with such mental reservations of anxiety restraining them.

When the breakfast was ended, Wesley noted that Leila herself carried the dishes away, with Daphne's help. When the table was clear, she closed the door on the men and said:

"We'll leave you two alone to talk business."

Father and son regarded each other askance, as uneasily as two wrestlers circling for a hold. Wesley was the first to speak. He said:

"Well, my boy?"

"I wrote you a long letter last night, Dad," Bayard said.

"You did? What about?"

Bayard had guessed the situation; he saw the cruel joke of it. He thought he could dull the edge with mockery. He snickered rather cravenly:

"I wrote to ask you to lend me some money. I guess I wasted the postage."

"And I guess I wasted the fare over here. I thought I oughtn't to have taken a berth in the sleeper, but your mother insisted—said I'd not been feelin' any too well."

Bayard laughed outright-a laugh

wet with vinegar for tears.

Wesley sank into a chair with the little whimper of a sick old man—such a sound as that Belgian schoolmaster with the umbrella must have made when the bullet knocked him over into the ditch. That bullet and the countless others, and the shrapnel, were reaching across the ocean into American towns.

Bayard went to his father and put his arm about him and regretted his Wall Street disaster with a ferocious remorse. He could not speak, and there was a long dumbness before Wesley sighed:

"I guess we got to lose the home, then."

That "then" was a history in a word. Bayard bent his head in shame at his helplessness. As usual, it was Wesley who found a shabby comfort in the situation—found it for his son.

"Don't you think anything more about it, my boy. I'm kind of relieved." He giggled with a pitiful senility. "I been so ashamed at traipsin' over here to bother you, instead of rushin' over to help you like I ought to—being your father—that I'm kind of glad you can't do it. I got no right to add to your troubles. I'm supposed to take care of you."

THE story of a philosophical crook who scoffed at Scotland Yard.

Crossed Trails

By Frank Froest, M.V.O.

Former Superintendent of the Department of Criminal Investigation of Scotland Yard.



ILLUSTRATED BY RICHARD CULTER

R. MICHAEL BREAN stood with legs far apart, hands deep in his trousers pockets and head a little upon one side like a reflective cock-sparrow. He was a small man with a somewhat rotund figure, and beyond a taste in cocktails and the slightest American accent, he was entirely in keeping with the other clients in the most exclusive hydropathic establishment in the north of England.

As he fastened a cigar to the north-western angle of his rat-trap mouth and benevolently watched the traffic through the revolving doors, a quick man might have observed something like a shadow pass across his face. To a man like Michael Brean the apparition of a Scotland Yard detective some three hundred miles due north of London was disconcerting. He wondered what might happen next, but he was too hardened to surprises to show it.

It was annoying to Paxton also. He was interested in Brean, but he had had no desire to meet him so promptly on arrival. Nevertheless he grinned under his waxed mustache and moved across the parquet flooring.

"How d' do, Mike?" Paxton spoke genially and thrust out a heavy hand.

"Hello, Mr. Paxton." Brean contrived to inflect glad cordiality into his voice. "When did you get down? D'you want me?" "Just in. Come and have a drink. Anywhere we can talk for ten minutes."

Now, according to the popular notion of detectives, they do not invite desperate criminals to drink as a preliminary to arrest. There should at least have been a jingling of handcuffs or the glint of an automatic. But there was none. Besides, these two men did not dislike each other—outside of their professions. Brean would not have murdered Paxton except as a matter of business, and Paxton held the abilities of the crook in respectful esteem.

IT had all begun nine months before, when a man supposed to be Mr. Rupert Alton, from Columbus, Ohio, struck London on a pleasure trip. Mr. Rupert Alton was, of course, the millionaire president of the Alton Car Syndicate, as the estate agents whom the visitor approached for a temporary town residence easily found from his references. It seemed to them a dispensation of Providence on their behalf, since Sir Adolf Lenney's Connaught Square house was in their hands and no one but a millionaire could form a fitting tenant even for three months.

Two months later, the real Mr. Rupert Alton was exceedingly annoyed when a couple of plain clothes officers, meeting him outside the Savoy Hotel, politely but firmly requested his com-

pany to the nearest police station. Then it was that Anglo-American friendliness was strained to its limits, for the second Mr. Alton proved to be a veritable millionaire. His "namesake" had, it seemed, weeded Sir Adolf's rare and costly furniture from attic to cellar, selling it at auction-rooms in London.

Sir Adolf kicked Scotland Yard; Mr. Alton kicked Scotland Yard; and Scotland Yard in its own imperturbable fashion said: "This is Hungry Mike again.

Go get him, Paxton."

There was not a finger-print, a cigarette end or even a broken waistcoat button to afford justification for so confident an assertion. All that served to show that it was Mike's work was its audacity and skill. And none knew better than Paxton that he would not only need to find Mike but the evidence

necessary to conviction. So he philosoph-

ically shrugged

his shoulders and pulled strings that actuated telegraph wires, printing machines, several hundred detectives and several thousand other police officers. But Hungry Mike had inconsiderately dropped out of sight. Paxton pigeonholed his dossier and waited. There was no sense in piling up expense. Scotland Yard does not forget, and it knew that now the search had been started it would become automatic. Sooner or later, Mike, if he were alive, was bound to reappear.

And he had reappeared. An alert constable at Harrowton had noticed that the description and photograph of Hungry Mike corresponded to those of Mr. Michael Brean. And next day, swift as an express train could take him, Detective Inspector Paxton descended on

his prey.

IT is possible that had Paxton been sure of his evidence, Mike might have been roped in in a more peremptory fashion. But nothing is ever lost by courtesy, and though rigid rules held the detective from questioning, there was always the possibility that some valuable hint might be dropped.

By the big French windows overlooking the trim lawn the two men had their drinks. "What gets me," said Mr. Brean, as he set down his glass and let his eyes wander slowly from the window to his captor, "is what you want me for. There isn't a thing that I can think of."

> Paxton crossed his legs. He was in no particular hurry.

"No?" he said, blandly interrogative, though his confidence extended no further than the back of his tongue.
"There never is, is there? I don't believe we ever met,
Mike, when you had done anything."

Brean leaned forward a trifle apprehensively. "Well, is there?"

he demanded.

"It looks pretty bad for you, Mike," said the other vaguely. "If-"

A stronger minded man than

Michael Brean might have found a French window hard to resist in the circumstances. The two men moved simultaneously, but Mike had a shade the start and the table was between the detective and the window. It was over in a second. For souvenirs Paxton held a shapely brown brogue shoe and a cut lip, while Mike was halfway across the lawn, chuckling inwardly.

The inspector made no attempt at pursuit. He stood calmly applying first aid to his injured lip with a handkerchief, and something like a grin stole over his features as Mike swerved into a path and into the arms of a burly man who

hugged him with fervor.
"The devil!" said Mike disgustedly, resigning himself with no attempt at a struggle. "I might have guessed it. No need to squeeze me to death, old son, if you do love me."

His new captor scientifically locked arms and pushed the prisoner back through an interested group of specta-

tors. Paxton met them.

"Good for you, Weston," he commented. "Say, Mike, you didn't really believe you could get away like that, did you? I didn't think you'd fall for such foolishness." He surveyed the group which surrounded them. "Where's the manager of this place-oh, good morning. We are police officers. you show us this man's room?"

"What are you arresting him for?" demanded the manager. He was a little shocked at the thought that his exclusive establishment had unwittingly harbored a man "wanted" by the police.

It was Weston who replied. "Theft

of furniture," he said shortly.

Brean gaped. "Theft of furniture?" he repeated, and there was relief in his voice. "Why, I thought -here, Mr. Weston, you needn't hang on to me like this. I'm not trying any more get-aways."

Paxton regarded his face attentively. "Why, Mike," he said, "what did you think you were wanted for?"

Brean's eyes met his, grave and stolid. "Espionage, of course," he retorted. "Didn't you hear that I was a German spy. I've got plans of the new pump-room in the soles of my shoes at

this very moment. Think I want to be shot in the Tower ditch?"

"You're a funny dog, aren't you?" growled Weston. "Shut up."

NO further temptations were put in Mike's way, for handcuffs decorated his wrists and the two local officers who had been waiting with Weston at strategic points outside the hydro were present while the C. I. D. men searched his baggage.

"Pity you had all this long journey for nothing," he commented. "The trouble with you Scotland Yard men is that you've got no science. You just blunder along, and sometimes you're lucky and sometimes you make a blunder-like this. I'll bet you fifty pounds to an orange you've got no evidence against me."

Paxton carefully collected some torn fragments of paper from the grate and



Suddenly Brean's jew dropped and his gaze waver swiftly to where Paxton was leaning with the absorbed air of a jig-saw expert over a little table, trying to evolve order out of the scraps of paper which he had rescued from the grate.

know, Mike," he observed with good humor. "'Tisn't my fault if things have become unpleasant for you. I was trying to treat you like a gentleman till you made that break."

"I've got no grudge against you," admitted Mike handsomely. "You've got some sort of fool idea, and you're bound

to put it through."

"That's the way to look at it, sonny. We'll be a little while yet and we might as well wait here as anywhere else till train time. One of you boys run down and get some papers. Mr. Brean might care to have a look at 'em. It's pretty

dull for you, eh Mike?"

In consideration of the difficulty presented by the handcuffs it was Paxton who considerately opened the Evening News for the prisoner, and Brean, who had the philosophy of the big criminal, was placidly content. He had no doubt that the worst that could happen was an enforced stay in London for a week or so. That the detectives had evidence to insure a conviction on the charge they had mentioned he did not believe for a moment.

It was therefore with a comparatively easy mind that he glanced through the papers. Suddenly his jaw dropped and his gaze wavered swiftly to where Paxton was leaning with the absorbed air of a jig-saw expert over a little table, trying to evolve order out of the scraps of paper which he had rescued from the grate. Brean returned intently to the headlines which had attracted his attention.

STRANGE VILLAGE MYSTERY.

COUNTRY HOUSE FIRE RESULTS IN ARREST OF BEAUTIFUL BRIDE. .

CHARGE OF MURDER AND ARSON.

£20,000 INSURANCE PLOT ALLEGED BY LOCAL POLICE.

His lips snapped tightly together as he read on:

As the result of the recent destruction by fire of a country house at Frenhurst, Sussex, Mrs. Mordaunt Peck, whose husband was burned to death, has been arrested on charges of murder and arson. The fire broke out at dead of night and was discovered by Mrs. Peck after it had obtained an alarming hold of the premises. She immediately aroused the household, but according to her story at the coroner's inquest, in her agitation and alarm did not notice till some minutes later that her husband, who was a heavy sleeper, was missing. By that time the house was a mass of flames. Though a message was sent to the nearest fire station, eight miles distant, the firemen arrived too late to be of any assistance.

The charred bones of the dead man were discovered later in the ruins, and the local police, acting on information supplied by the assessors to Lloyd's, with whom a claim for £20,000 had been lodged by the widow, made a strict investigation. They came to the conclusion that the house had been deliberately fired and accordingly Mrs. Peck had been ar-

rested.

Mr. Peck was an American engaged in financial matters, who settled in this country on his marriage a few months ago. It was then that he insured himself in favor of his widow for £20,000. Mrs. Peck is a beautiful woman of about twenty-five, but no information as to her antecedents has been gained. The case has aroused the greatest interest in the district.

Mike dropped the paper to the floor as though weary of its contents.

"No fresh war news," he declared idly. "Say, Mr. Paxton, might I have a smoke? There's some very good cigars in that box in my suit-case. You boys might help yourselves."

THE formalities of an identification in the London police district are stringent. Paxton badly wanted Hungry Mike identified, but he had to allow every possible chance to the accused man. A dozen men more or less of the stamp of Brean in clothes and appearance had been collected in the lofty bare charge-room and stood in a row when the crook was brought in and invited to stand amongst them where he witnesses pleased. Then the brought in one by one. Unanimously they shook their heads. They were per-fectly sure that the fraudulent Mr. Adolf Lenney was not there.

Paxton gritted his teeth and went back to Scotland Yard. He had anticipated something of the kind but

was none the less annoyed.

"Without identification, there isn't evidence enough to hang a mouse," he told his superintendent. "Of course, he was made up when he posed as Lenney—beard, wig, false eyebrows and all the rest of it. People' seem to think that criminals disguise themselves after a crime has been committed—when men like Mike do it before. Even the handwriting on the checks isn't his. He must have had that done by his stalls. What I can't understand, though, is why he tried to make a get-away. He must have known that he had us treed—in fact he said so. And where's he been all this while? If he hadn't some game on he'd have stayed to brazen it out."

"You are still holding him?"

"Sure. But it'll be a wash-out when he comes before the court—unless we get a remand—and I don't see what's the good of that," he concluded gloomily. "We can't scare up any more evidence."

"Ah." The superintendent rubbed his chin. "I think you'd better let Weston ask for one, though. It may be useful to have Mike on tap for a day or two. Now here's something else. Have you read anything about this murder at Frenhurst?"

"I saw something about it in the

papers."

His chief picked a photograph up from the side of his desk. "I've had Lourne, one of Lloyd's assessors, in here about it. He brought in this photograph. That's Mrs. Peck. Recognize it?"

Paxton studied the picture with puzzled face. It was that of a beautiful woman in evening dress and much bejeweled. Suddenly recollection came to him. "Why sure. It's Khaki Annie. She's come along some if this picture isn't any fake. It's five or six years since I ran across her, and then she hadn't an h to her name. It was I who pulled her for blackmail."

"I thought you'd remember her." The other's tone was significant. "Well, she's been in the States some years, and she was pretty friendly with Mike. Whether she was his wife or not I don't know."

"I see. I shouldn't wonder if you're right, sir. If he was involved in this murder business it would explain why he was so scared when we got him. I'll look into this."

"You might make a few inquiries, I think. We've had a request from the county police to send a man down.

You'd better go, as you've been handling Mike."

"Very good, sir."

Paxton took his departure, twisting his mustache meditatively.

IN tracing effects back to causes—which is what all detective work consists of—the Scotland Yard man relies more on the perfect organization of which he is a part than on imaginative deduction. It takes longer but it is more reliable. Paxton could draw a conclusion as well as most men, but juries like conclusions with a backing.

He was in no hurry to get down to Frenhurst. If Mike had really had a hand in the murder the first step would be to trace his recent relations to "Mrs. Peck," and that could be more readily carried through in London than anywhere else. In the Criminal Record Office, which is to the detective what the library at the British Museum is to the student, he found an ancient photograph of Khaki Annie. This, with the one the superintendent had handed him and a short description of the girl, he sent to be reproduced and circulated throughout London.

Then he slipped down by the underground to the city, where the firm of assessors acting for Lloyd's met him with

something like glee.

"Excellent men, the country police," said Lourne, a young man of thirty, who had himself unraveled many insurance frauds, "loyal and energetic and all that sort of thing, don't you know, but they haven't the experience when it comes to a really big problem. On my soul, I had the greatest difficulty in persuading them to arrest the woman, though it was plain as a pike-staff that the whole lot of furniture had been drenched with petrol. We shall feel safer with a Yard man on the case.

"What's her explanation?" asked

Lourne elevated his eyebrows. "My dear man, she's got none. It's a frame-up from the word go. She's got this poor pigeon, Peck, and rushed him off to the registry office, then round to the insurance companies, then down to the country, and next thing we hear is this. Like so many incendiaries, she overdid

the petrol, that's all. Of course it's possible that she doped the man beforehand, though if she did poison him there's no chance of proving it. There's not enough left of him for that."

"No need to prove that," observed Paxton. "If she set fire to the place and he died through that, you've got all the

proof you want of murder."

"Yes. I know that. But things are a bit weak, you know. We can only say that petrol was used and that she had a strong motive to do away with her husband. And she's just the kind of woman to impress a jury—fragile, pale, pathetic looking, and a great actress. You should have seen her when she was arrested."

Paxton met his eyes with a glint of amusement. "The truth is, you're think-

ing that unless there's a conviction your clients lose £20,000. You've got no views of abstract justice in this case."

"Sure. That's my business," agreed Lourne unabashed. "It's on abstract justice that you come in. She's quite determined if she is a goodlooker. She as good as said that this was a plant of the insurance companies and that they would suffer for it. Not, mind you," he went on

earnestly, "that I don't believe she's guilty. It's a deliberately planned, coldblooded murder, if ever there was one

in this world."

"Yes, it begins to look like that," agreed the inspector. "I shall be going down to Frenhurst in an hour or two, but there's one little thing I'll get you to do for me." He took a photograph of Hungry Mike from his breast pocket. "That's a photograph of a man I've got reason to think may have been concerned in this affair. You might have it sent round to the insurance offices to see if anyone remembers him."

"Sure I will. Nothing else we can

do, is there?"

"I think not just now, thanks. Well, I'll be moving. See you again before very long."

DOWN at Grape Street police station, Mr. Brean was seated in his cell discussing with appetite an excellent meal which he had had sent in. He nodded as the jailer admitted Paxton.

"Sit right down, Mr. Paxton. Sorry I can't offer you better accommodation, but in a day or two's time— Well, how goes it? Strikes me you'll hear some nasty things from the magistrate tomorrow when you haven't a shred of evidence to offer against me."

The inspector stretched out his feet. "We're only giving evidence of arrest to-morrow, Mike. We're going to ask for

a remand."

"What's that?" The question was snapped out like a pistol shot. Mike was startled, and for once he showed it. "You can't do that. I'll have an action

against you for false imprisonment as it is."

"Sorry," murmured Paxton apologetically. "I know you'd like to be out just now, but it can't be done. Now, if you could tell us something about your movements during the last six months—something you know we could test—"

Brean eyed him uneasily. "How can I do that?" he remonstrated. "I've been all over the

place."

"Happen to run across Khaki Annie

during that time?"

The other's face had become perfectly blank. He was thoroughly on his guard.

"Annie?" he repeated indifferently.

"Why, I haven't seen her for over a vear."

"Really. I thought she was a pal of yours. You'll be sorry to hear that she's been arrested down in Sussex for mur-

der."

Brean nodded as casually as though the other were merely remarking that it was a fine day.

"That so? Well, it's a mistake, I guess. Annie wouldn't hurt a fly."

"Ever hear of Mordaunt Peck?"
"I seem to know the name—can't trace him, though. Say, Mr. Paxton, what are you driving at? What's all



Lourne, a young man who had unraveled many insurance frauds.

this about Khaki Annie and a murder got to do with me, anyway?"

"I don't know," returned Paxton thoughtfully. "Thought perhaps you'd be sorry to see Annie in it bad."

"Oh, she'll be all right," retorted Brean easily. "You take it from me."

"Glad you think so." An idea was crystallizing in Paxton's brain. "By the way, Mike, who's your dentist?"

He laid his hand on the bell-push that summoned the jailer and before the astonished Brean could reply he was gone.

PAXTON was thoughtful as he made his way out through Regent Street. It was perfectly clear to him now that Brean was in some way complicated with Khaki Annie. His very indifference showed that. It would be very hard on a man who considered himself equal in intelligence to anyone in the Criminal Investigation Department if by one means or another he could not link together the two ends of the case.

It was one important point gained that both those he held to be principals in the affair were in confinement. There was always a chance that though Mike had been wary the girl might be induced to talk. But he was not relying on that.

Before he left Scotland Yard for Frenhurst he left Weston and another man instructions calculated to keep them busy for many hours, and not till the evening train did he drop down to what the evening papers called the scene of the mystery.

"To tell you the truth," said the local inspector who met him, "we were pushed into this by the insurance people. It's right enough that she had a motive for the murder, but how we're to bring it home to her is beyond me. Here's the house—or what's left of it. We've been sifting ashes for a week, with the help of the salvage people."

Paxton nodded assent as he descended. He surveyed the blackened and ruined walls for a minute or two and poked with a stick among the débris.

"Look's as if a complete job was made of it," he commented.

"Ab-solutely complete," agreed his companion.

The detective tucked his stick under

his arm. "Not much for me to do here. Suppose we have a look at the stuff you've found. You don't chance to know, do you, whether they've come across a set of false teeth yet?"

"False teeth?" The county officer stared as though he thought the London expert's wits might be wandering. "I don't know. I didn't bring the schedule with me, and they're picking up things every day. They're in that cottage." He jerked his head across the road. "We'll go and have a look if you like."

"Has Peck been buried yet?"

"No. We've been trying to find some relatives of his. You'll see his remains over here, too, if you like. It's rather a ghastly exhibition."

But Paxton worried very little about the grim nature of the relics retrieved from the fire. A detective is as little liable to let a dead body encountered in the way of business upset his appetite as is a doctor. He fingered even the charred bones of the dead man with unfeigned interest and even—when his country colleague's attention was distracted—slipped one in his pocket for further purposes.

There was Peck's watch, a fused mass of metal; a ruined bunch of keys; a few metal suspender-buttons; and, curiously enough, an almost uninjured set of false teeth. These latter Paxton also picked up and placed in his pocket.

"I think that's about all," he remarked. "It's a ghastly show, as you say."

"Bit early yet to ask whether you've formed any opinion, I suppose?" said the other man deferentially.

"Well, I never like to be certain," said Paxton reflectively, "but I don't mind saying this: Whoever has committed murder, Mrs. Mordaunt Peck hasn't. I reckon we'll get along. I want to telephone and there's a letter I'll have to send to town."

AT half past twelve the next morning a discreet tap at Lourne's door heralded the entrance of Detective Inspector Paxton, spruce and debonair. "Morning, Mr. Lourne," he said cheerfully. "Feel inclined for a little run up west?"

"What's the game?" demanded Lourne.

Paxton's eyes twinkled. "Just a police-court charge against a man who says Scotland Yard's got no science. I think you'll be interested."

"Much more interested about the Frenhurst murder. Is it anything to do with that? You're back pretty quick,

aren't you?"

"There is a possibility that it has a bearing on the matter. I can't go into details now. If you're busy it doesn't matter."

"Oh sure, I'll come. Just a moment."
In five minutes they were swinging westward in a taxi. They halted at Great Marlborough Street, and with a nod to the policeman at the door the detective led the way into the crowded little court. For a moment he held a whispered conversation with the magistrate's clerk and then with the assistant jailer. The latter assisted a "drunk and disorderly" from the dock.

"Michael Brean, your worship," he

announced.

"Solid looking for a corpse, isn't he?" whispered Paxton in Lourne's ear.

A sleek, black-haired, olive-skinned lawyer whom Lourne recognized as the most astute thieves' mouthpiece in London, had arisen. "In this case, your worship, I represent the prisoner."

Paxton walked to the witness box. "Central Detective Inspector James Paxton, C. O.," he repeated glibly. "....Swear.....evidence.....shall give shall be truth, whole truth, nothing but the truth. In this case, your worship, we propose to offer no evidence."

Mike cast one smiling glance of triumph at the officer and bowed to the magistrate as that functuary nodded abruptly and jerked out "Dismissed. Next case" all in a breath, and had to be almost pushed out of the dock by the iailer.

Somehow Paxton was by his side as they emerged into the corridor. The crook shook his head reprovingly. "I told you you were wasting time," he

said. "Say-"

Some one touched him on the shoulder and he wheeled to confront an inspector of county police. "Michael Brean," he said, "I have a warrant for your arrest on a charge of fraud and arson. It is my duty to warn you that anything you may say may be taken down in writing and...."

The truth forced itself on Mike with the suddenness and emphasis of a steam-hammer. His fists clenched.

"This is you, Paxton," he snarled. Paxton wearily shrugged his shoul-

ders.

"You must take it easy, Mike," he advised. "You're a corpse, you know. Only—" he leaned forward and shook a finger reprovingly—"you should remember when you're dealing with unscientific folk like Scotland Yard to burn your dentist's bills."

Mike stared blankly. Then he shrugged his shoulders resignedly. "Oh, all right, Paxton," he said. "You'll see this'll be as big a frost as the case just finished."

"I DON'T understand," said Lourne.
"No," said Paxton. "Yet it's simple enough. Mr. Michael Brean, who has just been carted away, is Mr. Mordaunt Peck, who was burnt to death at Frenhurst and for whose murder Mrs. Peck—whom by the way we know as Khaki Annie—is under arrest."

"When it's ajar," muttered Lourne. "Who under the sun was the man who

was burned?"

"No, it's not a riddle. It's as simple as A, B, C, if you'll listen. We'd been looking for Brean—Hungry Mike—for months on another case, but we lost all trace of him. In point of fact, he was down at Frenhurst with Annie laying for your people. He was Peck. He didn't show up where we were likely to notice him till after the fire, and then some hundreds of miles from Frenhurst. We hurried up to the place and grabbed him quick—see?

"Well, it so happened that up at the Yard they recognized the photograph of Mrs. Peck as Khaki Annie, who was known as a pal of Brean's. That was how I happened to be pulled into the

iob.

"Now, Mike had me cold on this other thing. I knew he was guilty, but proving it was an entirely different matter. And what's more, he knew that we could do nothing. Yet before he knew



Somehow Paxton was by Brean's side as they emerged into the corridor. The crook shook his head reprovingly. "I told you you were wasting time," he said. "Say—"

exactly what we were after he made an attempt to escape-a fact which made me suspicious that he'd been in some big thing on which he wasn't so sure that

we couldn't get him.

"When they told me about this insurance business at the Yard, it was as clear as noonday that he had had a finger in it. And there was a matter which hadn't anything to do with the other case but it chanced to put me on the trail here. Among some old papers he'd torn up and thrown away at Harrowton was a dentist's bill for two sets of false teeth, one item dated three months back and the other immediately before the fire. I suppose that some people do have accidents to their teeth, but it set me thinking, and a little conversation I had with Mike in his cell led me to feel pretty sure that there had been no murder at all.

"I sent a man down to the dentist and put other inquiries afoot and went down to Frenhurst to have a look round. Among other things, I got hold of a rib of the late lamented Peck and sent it up to town to be examined by one of the biggest surgeons we could lay our hands on. He was able to point out that it was a bone from a prepared skeleton built up by an anatomist, probably for the purposes of demonstration."

Lourne opened his eyes wide. "You

don't mean-"

"I do. Of course, I had London ransacked till we found the place where it was bought. That was only a matter of pushing inquiries. And we found the establishment. The false teeth had been a delicate touch of Mike's. He's like that. He stage-manages a thing well, and if you people had felt inclined to raise any question of identity there were the teeth-he'd carefully been to some local dentist to make some trivial alteration to them-to confuse you.

"Another thing was that down in the depths of the country, Mike had not considered it necessary to disguise himself as he has sometimes when doing a job in town. So we can get heaps of

identification."

"So," said Lourne slowly. "He's the man who said Scotland Yard had no science."

"That's the fellow," agreed Paxton.

new story of the wallflower A of black-rimmed eyeglasses,

The Madness Midsummer

FTERWARD, Harold Lambert called his little adventure the madness of midsummer. Strictly speaking, it began something later than midsummer, and considerable reasonable calculation diversified the madness. But it was only by such a title that the youth could justify his escapade, could make it consistent with the position he had subtly fought for and won as leader in the select younger set of Royal. For great men may err only under some emotional compulsion which should be characterized as an aberration.

A gallant soul, Harold did not wish to blame his mother and sister Elsie, who had gone abroad with Elsie's fiancé, leaving Harold without the anchor of home. Nor would he blame the two girls of Royal who were dearest to him - piquant, pansy-eyed Flossie Harlowe, or tender Caroline Walton, whose blue eyes turned to him for guidance—as the eyes of the lost traveler turn to the fixed star. No, chivalric Harold would not say it was their fault; he merely reflected that if they had acted toward him as he would have acted toward a popular young man had he been two girls, all this would not have happened. The one point that Caroline and Flossie had in common was their admiration for him, and they were of such exacting temperaments that they each demanded from him a sign of preference. Harold had no objection in the world to offering that sign of preference to each when he was alone with her; what irked him was that each girl demanded that sign of preference in the presence of the other.

who adopted a "manner" and a set and became a social czar.

By Maude Radford Warren

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

This, Harold considered, was thoroughly unsophisticated, thoroughly lacking in savoir faire. What those girls should have done was play the gamewhich meant, play the game Harold's way. He was devotedly attached to each; all he asked was that one of them prove to him in some incontrovertible way that he was meant for her and her alone. Until that time came, he was quite content to balance himself between them. As womanly girls, it was their business to assist him in balancing-instead of which each was exhibiting the wellknown selfishness of the human race, and thinking only of what she wanted, not of what Harold wanted.

In short, during the summer the two had made it very difficult for Harold. Moreover, neither of them would take a vacation, for fear of leaving the field open to the other. No wonder

that, unconsciously, Harold began looking for distraction. Still another matter disturbed him: the yearly dancing craze was setting in a little

> earlier in the season than was usual in Royal. This fact disturbed him considerably; was a good dancer, but

Bud Henderson, whom he had shouldered out of the social leadership of Royal, was a transcendently good dancer — one of those lucky youths who are so plainly children of Mercury that they can sway in the dance like a flower under a rain of hailstones, and wear a superior, ineffable expression like Sir Galahad or the archangel Michael, and still put it over on an admiring audience. Harold feared that when Bud exhibited the new steps in his inimitable way the girls of Royal would once more be so enthralled with Bud's lissome legs that they might forget Harold, whose divine right it was to lead them.



shares, he was reflecting on this mat-

ter. Only the night before, Bud had been doing a difficult variation of the waltzcanter before Harold's very eyes, with Flossie Harlowe. Caroline, who ordinarily did not care for Bud, had asked him to teach her. This could not go on. Harold had to do something. He walked down to the little river that edged his farm. He liked to wander beside it. Here he made up the wild stories of adventure with which he had been accustomed to solace his loneliness in those far-off empty days before he became the leader of the Royal élite. Here it was that he faced and solved some of the knotty problems that come to all leaders. On this particular day it was here that he met the beautiful Miss Juliana de la Croix.

He came to the abrupt bend where the river turned off his farm and lost its importance by becoming the border of some one's else farm. Under a big oak tree sat a slim, golden-haired lady, with big tears dropping down her face. A cold observer would have said that her golden hair was bleached and that grief had devastated her face the more readily because it had much rouge and powder through which to meander. But such a cold spectator would not have been twenty-two years old and with a taste for romance. What Harold saw was a damsel in distress; what he felt was that here in real life was a stock situation of fiction-which, often as he had read of it, had never before met his vision.

Harold had never in his life addressed a person he had not been introduced to; but now, hat in hand, he unhesitatingly

approached and said gently:

"Madam, may I be of assistance to you?"

Juliana jumped to her feet in quite genuine surprise and embarrassment. "Oh, gee!" she said simply.

"Forgive me if I have disturbed you,"

murmured Harold.

"It's all right," said Juliana. "I guess it's wet enough here without my adding any dampness. Quite a hot day, isn't it?" she added, moving her skirt aside.

Harold was not used to strange ladies, but he was adaptable, and he caught the invitation of Juliana's movement. He sat down beside her and said: "Wont you tell me what the matter is? Perhaps I can help you."

"Oh, I'm just feeling a little sorry for myself," she sighed, "but at that I'm no

worse off than lots of people."

At this point the cool observer, however cynical, would have decided that Juliana was a good sort in spite of her make-up. Harold saw her as a noble thwarted soul, eager not to inflict her woes on a stranger.

"Confide in me, I beg of you," he said. Juliana checked a giggle and looked

at him attentively.

"You're a nice ki—I mean a nice, kind gentleman," she said. "First, sir, I must tell you that though I have to earn my own living, I have seen better days.

Once my people had money."

Harold had yet to learn that a certain type of girl always comes from a family once of plenteous fortune, or else she is a Southerner whose people, since the War, have known refined privation, or else she is the child of a clergyman. He pitied Juliana for having to earn her own living, though there were a good many nice girls in Royal, in the same position, whom he had never thought of pitving.

"I have been on the stage," Juliana said, "—not in any grand parts, but in the chorus, where they nearly always let me do some solo dancing. I've been in vaudeville too. But you know, anyone in the profession can have bad luck. It's happened to me, all right; and I'm out of a regular job—acting as a cloakmodel in one of the big stores in Rochester. That is to say, they call me a cloakmodel, but I have to sell dresses to women who can't make up their minds,—and have none to make up,—and the management pays me as if I was a cashgirl."

Harold clucked in sympathy.

"You may be wondering why I can't lay off," Juliana continued, "instead of demeaning myself by selling garments. But I got a—I got a sick father and two little sisters in California. We've got a ranch there, not paid for yet. I got to earn till it is paid for. Then I'll join them."

"You are very noble," Harold said, much moved.

"I guess not; I wish I had a better

job, though," Juliana said. Then she heaved a long sigh. "Well," she added, "I haven't said so much in a week. I don't talk so much as some."

Harold was almost trembling with sympathy, but for all his emotion, a little quiver of self-remembrance ran through him. He had difficulties of his own, forsooth; he had come out here to solve them, and some of Juliana's remarks had given him a hint as to how she might serve his purposes. He sat beside her, busily thinking. Then he asked, difficently, if he might escort her back to Rochester. When she assented, he asked her to dinner, an invitation she quite expected. Then he proposed his plan.

TWO days later, Harold developed his plan still further. "The crowd" was having supper with Caroline Walton, and afterward Bud began showing Caroline some new steps. The talk ran on dancing and on what they were doing with dancing in New York.

"I've been thinking," Harold said, with the languid county-family voice that always commanded attention from his friends, "that we'd better help pay off the debt on the Parish-house by having two pay-as-you-enter dances. Just let everyone in, and every crowd dance by itself—"

"Nothing new in that," growled Bud Henderson, "—just like a church sup-

"Ah, no; I don't think so—quite," said Harold gently; "you see, at a church supper, you don't dance with your plate, or with the person you sit next to. I have long thought," he added, as the idea freshly struck him, "that the thing to do would be to have a sort of supper dansant. Have the supper ready and an orchestra there at seven, and have tables holding from two up, where people could order stuff à la carte, and get up and dance between the courses."

"Harold! How splendid!" cried-Flossie.

"Splendid indeed," echoed Caroline.
"Ye-eh, and have the girls kill themselves getting up the supper," said Bud
Henderson.

Here Bud scored. The girls, whose mothers really did the work, looked appreciatively at him. Clearly, Harold had to obliterate Bud's impression. He hurried on to his real scheme.

"We'll make so much money that the girls can afford to hire caterers, or cooks," he said; "of course, that's part of my idea. The rest is that at certain intervals during the evening a couple of professional dancers shall perform for us."

"Oh, Harold, superb!" cried Caroline, shooting her words forth before Flossie could speak.

"Splendid!" chorused the other girls. "Yeh, and the professional dancers would eat up all the profits," commented Bud.

"Ordinarily, I expect they would," yawned Harold. "But I happen to know of a stage dancer, a Miss Juliana de la Croix, who is at present in Rochester. She does these dances—she and a partner."

"Yeh-friend of yours, I suppose?" queried Bud.

"Dear me, no; I don't know her from Adam," Harold said. "It's nothing to me. If you don't like the idea, people, or if somebody else wants to pick the professionals, all right. I only mentioned it, because this Rochester fellow says he could get her cheaper for any friend of his."

Flossie Harlowe, whose follower Bud was, nudged him indignantly.

"Do hush up," she whispered; "it's hard enough to think of ways of paying off that debt without anyone wet-blanketing us."

"I think it's a splendid scheme," Caroline cried, "and if we can get the older folks to see the sense of it, I move that Harold go ahead and let his friend ask this Miss de la Croix for her terms."

The "older folks" were the minister and the Dorcas Society members and the other centurions who did the hard work in Royal—and who, unfortunately, did not always recognize the unflagging sagacity of the younger set. In the present case, however, they were won to consent. Their one amendment was that they could not afford caterers and dancers too, and that they would look after the cooking part. Then Harold was commissioned to go and see his friend in Rochester and discuss the financial demands of Juliana de la Croix.

IN the meantime Harold had seen Juliana several times, going to Rochester after bank hours to take her out to dinner. Flossie and Caroline had had several lonely evenings on their hands. The one consolation each had was that Harold was, at least, not calling upon the other—information they had culled by devious ways known to girls alone. Harold told them that he had to be out of town on business. What, he asked himself, could be more serious than the business of absorbing, at second hand, Juliana's varied experience?

"For a child of twenty-one," Harold said to her once, superior in the knowledge that his own years numbered twenty-two, "—for a child of twenty-one, you have seen a lot of life."

Juliana blinked. She had forgotten she had said she was twenty-one; she had thought she had said twenty-five. Really, she must watch out better and remember little things like that. This nice boy was too nice and too useful not to hold onto, and he was just the sort to resent a harmless little lie: a reflection which showed that Juilana had not discovered that Harold himself had too much respect for the truth to drag it out on all occasions.

"Oh, yes," Juliana agreed, "I've seen my share, I guess, but it takes you to show me how real literary some of the things I have been through are."

"Of course," said Harold superbly.

"At the time that we go through our deepest experiences, we are too busy living to generalize very much."

"How wise you are!" sighed Juliana. "If only I had met you before, Harold! How I envy those who can turn to you at any moment for guidance!"

"Telephone me whenever you like, Juliana," said Harold earnestly. "I'd love to be of use."

Juliana spluttered a little. Then she sighed again and patted Harold's hand. What could Harold do but take that little hand and give it a gentle pressure and then forget to stop?

Juliana de la Croix, and her dancing partner, Harold found out after repeated visits to the "Rochester fellow," would dance in Royal for thirty dollars an evening. Some of those concerned thought that was too much; others thought the professional dancers could not be of much account if they would dance for so little. But it was agreed to engage them. The church people worked like beavers to get the supper ready; the owner of the town hall lent it gratis; the orchestra agreed to come for a nominal sum; and at last the pay-as-you-enter dance was ready. The doors opened at seven o'clock, and all Royal poured in, the people who mattered and the people who did not matter, and scrambled for the best tables in glorious democracy.

Caroline and Flossie, Harold and Bud, and two other couples, shared a table which had a favored place right next the space which had been roped off for the dancing. Harold had taken pains that everyone at the table had gained the impression that he had never met Juliana de la Croix. He sat with his most sophisticated air, watching his friends and the hoi polloi being seated at the tables, some of which were on raised platforms so that everyone should have a good view of the floor. He saw the older women taking orders and serving the food, and was glad that he had given them this chance to exercise their passion for work and for managing. One lady came up and told him that no one was ordering stingily, and that his idea was just as smart as it could be. Bud scowled, while Harold made some deprecating gracious remark. He could afford to be gracious, for were not the kingdom and the power and the glory all his? And was not more glory yet to come?

HALF an hour later the dancing was gloriously on. The élite and the non-élite were circling on the floor together-if not dancing together, still pleasantly making way for each other. In an hour and a half even the latecomers had supped, and an air of expectancy pervaded the hall. In two hours the master of ceremonies cleared the floor. The dancers went back to their tables and ordered lemonade and waited expectantly. Then Juliana, chiffon-clad, fluttered upon the floor and did a really beautiful solo dance. It was received with great applause. Juliana bowed and blew kisses to the four quarters of the room. Next she held up her hand for silence.



"Say," called a voice, "say, how do you know the fellow you choose can move one foot before the other?"

But Juliana could answer that question, for Harold had anticipated it and carefully coached her.

"Ah, monsieur," said Juliana plaintively, "the soul of one artist always speaks to another. I shall make no mistake, especially since I have already watched the dancing on this floor."

There was delighted laughter, and then Juliana slowly made the rounds of the hall, looking attentively at the standing young men. Some of them stood like self-conscious ramrods; others leaned on one another for support. After Juliana had been all around the hall, she came back to the corner where Harold and his friends sat. Long and earnestly she gazed upon the young men at the table; she narrowed her gaze to Bud and Harold; she chose Harold.

"You are the man," she said; "come now, and I will teach you the steps."

The audience cheered and craned their necks to gaze at Harold. With lifted eyebrows and a mild, superior smile, he followed Juliana across the floor to her little dressing-room. Bud Henderson sat with stupefaction written on his face. Flossie looked uncertain; she was not sure that it was quite nice for Harold to be chosen like that by a public dancer. Caroline was bewildered but uncritical; whatever Harold chose to do must be right.

"Three cheers for Harrie Lambert!" called a voice, and Harold's heart warmed as he heard the applause of his friends

"Well!" said Bud, "that de la Croix woman will find that Harrie Lambert is indeed a leg o' lamb if she tries to drag him out in steps he's had no experience with." Caroline gave him a look of supreme contempt. How she hated jealousy! She hated it almost as much as she hated the proprietor-like look in Flossie's glance as it pursued Harold across the floor.

MEANWHILE Harold followed Juliana into an empty room, where they rehearsed once more the steps they had already painstakingly practiced. Now for the first time Harold felt a little nervous. What if his legs got stiff? What if he forgot some of the steps? What if anxiety should show in his face, instead of the negligently superior expression which he had so diligently achieved?

"You look like you got a little stagefright," said Juliana tactlessly; "you just got to make good now for your own sake—to say nothing of mine!"

As she finished, she put her hand on his arm and looked at him languishingly. Harold's limp spine stiffened. Noblesse oblige! this sweet girl depended on him to make her evening a success. He would not fail her. Of course, as she had suggested, there was the little matter of making good for his own sake, but it should not be that which inspired him.

They went out on the floor. Harold's townspeople watched eagerly, some of them amused, possibly hopeful for a contretemps, all of them interestedand Flossie and Caroline distinctly anxious. What they all saw was a tall, distinguished youth in evening clothes leading forth Juliana dressed as a little girl, with her golden hair hanging down her back in fluffy curls. What Harold saw was a fused sea of faces. The orchestra struck up, and they one-stepped about the room. Then they struck into the intricacies of the dance. Backward and forward went Harold, now holding his partner close, now sweeping her at arm's length from him, now meeting her coy glance, now looking over her head, but' always graceful, always debonnair. He well knew that essentially he was only a foil to Juliana. But that was not the effect he was having on his fellow-citizens. Some of Juliana's grace and charm would be credited to him. Moreover, in the eyes of everyone he would have scored not only as a dancer but also as a sophisticated man of the world who

could be superior to any situation which might face him.

The dance came to an end amid thunderous clapping. The dancers were forced to give a brief encore. Then Juliana ran away, blowing kisses, while Harold stopped to speak to his admiring friends. Among them there were youths who envied him, who thought themselves as good dancers as he, but only Bud Henderson was hostile to him.

"I mustn't stay," Harold said; "the next dance, Miss de la Croix tells me, is in costume. So I've got to learn the

steps and dress both."

"Oh, you're so quick, you are," said Bud with sneering suspicion. "Maybe you can dream those steps."

"Bud Henderson!" exploded Caroline.
"Why, it's awfully easy to pick up
steps, Bud," said Harold mildly; "I've
heard you say so and I've seen you do
it"

He walked away and got into a Pierrot dress, to be met presently by Juliana, the most ravishing of Pierrettes. The dance was a romp, which merely called for plenty of breath and speed. It delighted the audience even more than the first had, and when it and the encore were over, three cheers were given for Juliana and for Harold. Only a moment did Harold linger with his especial friends.

"I can't stop at all this time," he said.
"The next dance, according to Miss de la Croix, will use every bit of gymnastic

training I've ever had."

He passed on, nonchalantly acknowledging the remarks of his personal friends and the admiring glances of hoi polloi, who could never be in his circle but who were at least privileged to admire him from afar.

THEN followed the great triumph of Harold's evening—the Bulgarian dance. He looked his best in the bold, magnificent Bulgarian dress, and here the lion-heart of him had every chance to exhibit itself physically. He tossed his head defiantly, regally; he stamped in his jingling boots as if he were unmercifully treading down the pretensions of all rivals. He uttered what Juliana had told him was the Bulgarian cry, with a fine abandon which battered the ear-

drums of his elders and made some of his contemporaries beg him to whoop 'er up again. And to the muscle-testing, difficult parts of the dance Harold was also equal: indeed, it was to exhibit them that he had persuaded Juliana to invent the dance. He lifted Juliana with his arms extended; he flung her over his shoulder; he took her by the waist and spun her through the air. What matter that his muscles would be painful the next day? What matter, when from the youths were pouring approving and envious glances, and from the maidens wondering and rather shocked glances? Yes, to his other superiorities Harold could now add that of being a devil in his own home town.

Dizzy and breathless, Harold released his beautiful burden. This time he did not let her depart alone. As he had danced, a frenzy had entered Harold's veins, a sort of cave-man desire to walk off with Juliana to his lair and dance with her the rest of their lives. He modified it into a determination to smoke a cigarette and listen while she told him how good he had been to her. All this he did, and then she said:

"Now, you'd better peel off that costume and get back to your friends, while I get ready for my solo."

"All right," Harold said.

He rose, pitched away his cigarette, and then he seized Juliana with a Bulgarian grasp and kissed her.

"You shouldn't do that," murmured

Juliana.

"I know I shouldn't," Harold said, and kissed her again; upon which she

kissed him back,

Harold returned to his friends, walking on air. What matter if Juliana were slightly-er-colloquial? What matter even if her grammar were occasionally faulty? She was an artist; she had soul. He replied mechanically to the congratulations of his friends, scarcely noticing Bud's comment that it was marvelous how perfectly he fitted into the clothes of the incapacitated Simeon le Maître. He parried lightly the glances of Flossie and Caroline. They were sweet, sweet girls, playmates of his childhood-but the time had come to put away childish things. He knew from the scarcely concealed expectancy of their glances that

each girl was assured he would be her escort home. Ah, no! that could not be; he must be faithful to his fiancée.

FOR four days Harold made love devotedly to his Juliana. The only thing that disturbed him was that she did not seem so enthusiastic as he, so enthralled with wonder. Indeed, to her, love seemed a commonplace, almost a motherly thing. Yet she was fond of him. Of that she gave him a proof on the Wednesday after the dance. They were dining together as usual, when Juliana said, quite casually:

"You needn't bother to rehearse those dances with me next Saturday-because you aren't going to dance them."
"Wh-what!" he gasped.

"Your fat friend Mr. Henderson is going to double-cross you-and he sure is a swell dancer. And I'm going to double-cross him."

"What do you mean, Juliana?" Harold demanded.

"Why, just that this Mr. Henderson suspicioned something; he found out that there is no such person as Simeon le Maître. He piped the whole thing. He's hired me to pick him out next Saturday evening."

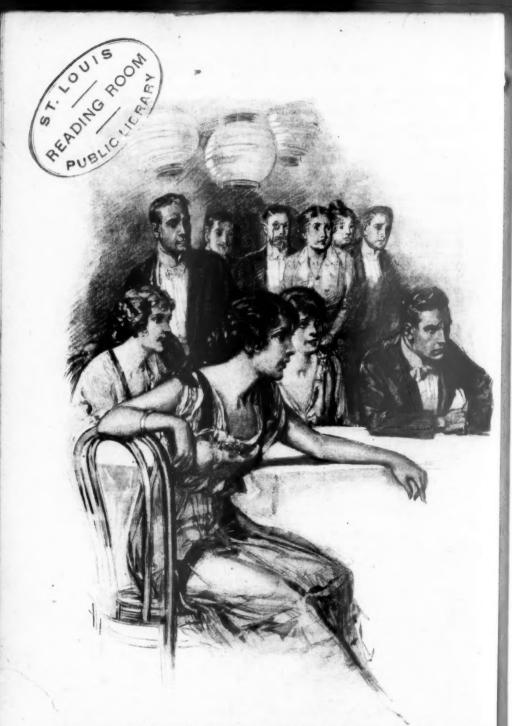
"Hired you?"

"Sure, Harold; now don't look at me that way. I tell you I gotta pay for that ranch for my father and the kids. I need the money, and I'm double-crossing him. You can fix up something so you wont go to the dance-so he wont have anything on you. See?"

Harold saw, but he scarcely liked

what he saw.

"Aw, go on," said Juliana; "you are thinking if I liked you as much as you liked me, I'd not 'a' done this. Well, that aint so, and I'll prove it to you. I got just heaps of requests for these dances from all the little towns around here-Caledonia and Olean-and all o' them. All the little tank towns are crazy to have me dance off the church debt, or raise money for a new fire-engine or something. I betcha I can get us engagements for five or six nights a week, and then you can be with me as much as you are now, see? And you can have the satisfaction of helping me pay for the ranch, see? I bet I pull down two hun-



Then followed the great triumph of Harold's evening—the Bulgarian dance. He looked his best in the bold lifted Juliana with his arms extended; he flung her over his shoulder; he took her by the waist



magnificent Bulgarian dress, and here the lion-heart of him had every chance to exhibit itself physically. He and spun her through the air. What matter that his muscles would be painful the next day?

dred a week. You can have some of it if you want it."

"Never!" cried Harold.

"I thought you'd feel that way. It'll improve your dancing a whole lot. If you use your car, you can always get back and go to your bank every morning. Now, don't you ever say I aint thoughtful for you."

"Juliana, you are wonderful," Harold murmured. "I guess I can handle Bud."

Harold handled Bud by inventing a sprained ankle that very night. He went

paper next morning the account of his accident and of his nomination of Bud as his understudy with Miss de la Croix. And pleasantest of all it was to sit at home on the night of the dance, knowing the spectators would look upon Bud as playing second fiddle to Harold.

THEN followed a delirious month for Harold, when he danced every night but Sunday with Juliana, and when his fame went abroad among all the towns in the radius about Buffalo and Roches-



to the bank next morning on crutches, and on the way he told all the friends he met that he had written Miss de la Croix that he could not dance with her the next Saturday, but had recommended Bud Henderson to take the place of the still indisposed Simeon le Maître. Friends who admired his generosity carried the news of his honor to the fuming Bud. Caroline sent broth to Harold, and Flossie sent him a meringue pudding. Both girls called him up on the telephone, for sympathetic conferences. He spent a pleasant evening, in spite of the fact that he knew Bud was rehearsing his coming dances with Juliana. Even more pleasant was it to see in the daily

ter. Some of his townspeople were indulgently amused at him, but most of them thought his avocation proved him to be both gifted and shrewd, for wild tales went about of the money he made. Two there were who disapproved: Caroline and Flossie. They never saw Harold now, unless they went into the bank for a sight of his tired face, or unless they were able to get a glimpse of him on Sunday. And generally on Sunday he was recuperating. Mrs. Harlowe and Mrs. Walton, inspired by their

daughters, wrote to Harold's mother. By return mail came a letter to him from Mrs. Lambert, commanding him for his health's sake, to stop dancing, and demanding to know all about the dancing woman he was associated with.

Harold got the letter one Saturday evening. On Sunday he went to see Juliana, though she had given him strict orders never to disturb her on that day of rest. He found her engaged in writing letters, and though she scolded him for coming, she consented to go for a drive with him. Harold drove to the riverside where he had first seen her, and asked her to get out. She looked very pretty, sitting on the green bank with a ray of sunshine striking on her blonde hair. Harold took her hand softly in his and said tenderly:

"Juliana, when are you going to marry me?"

And the moment that the words were spoken, Harold knew that he did not want to marry Juliana at all. Somehow, strangely, his midsummer madness fell from him, and he saw her as she wasand as worse than she was. Her hair was bleached; she must be fully thirty, a great age; she was grasping; she used bad grammar, and a toothpick. He was sick to death of dancing with her before silly audiences; his muscles ached, and he craved for sleep, and for a chance to see something of his old friends. As a drowning man sees his past in a flash, so Harold saw his-and he saw it slipping from him, as surely as a drowning man's. Flossie and Caroline stood on the banks of that past, sweet and wistful figures, waving him farewell, and longingly Harold stretched out to them metaphorical arms. Here were the girls who understood him, and what was more to the point, girls he understood. He wanted to go back to a life with them; he did not want to adventure into a new world with Juliana. But it was characteristic of him that he held an expression of ardor on his face and waited steadfastly for her reply. He did not doubt what it would be.

It came at him with the effect of a boomerang. Juliana looked at him thoughtfully and said: "You dear kid, I couldn't marry you if I wanted to, for I'm married already."

Harold covered his face with his hands to hide his look of joy, but he managed to make his shoulders shake as if in convulsive grief.

"You'll get over this," said Juliana, patting the heaving shoulders. "It isn't my father in the West, and my little sisters; it's my husband and kids. Thanks to you, dear Harold, I've got enough money to finish paying for the ranch. I'm going to him next week; I was just writing to tell him so."

"You-you have deceived me, Juliana," murmured Harold.

"No, I haven't, kid. I never said I loved you. I always said you was a great kid, and I was much obliged, and I am. You've given a lot of happiness to four folks, and I guess you aint the worse for it. You see me through one more week, and then we'll part the best of friends—hev?"

Harold said, brokenly, that since they couldn't part as more, they would part as friends. Juliana thought it would be better for him to drive her home at once and be by himself for a while. He agreed, and until he left her, he sustained very well the part of a broken suitor, struggling nobly with his feel-

But on the open road for home, Harold gave rein to his emotions. As once before on a boulevard ride, he sang at the top of his voice; he laughed like a maniac because his madness had left him, because he was free. He tossed aside lightly the fact that he had been a fool—who wasn't at times? And once bit by folly, a man with powers like his own would be twice shy. He was going back to his kingdom, more than ever a conqueror, and so glad to be back that he must be careful to conceal the fact from his two dearest subjects.

"How shall I square myself with Flossie and Caroline?" he asked himself, and he mused long. Then as he drove into the blessed town of Royal, he said to himself in a tone of conviction:

"I shall explain to each of them that, in order to be worthy of her friendship, I had to see life."

Another story of Harold Lambert in the next issue: "Glamour." It is one of the best of the many excellent stories Mrs. Warren has written. YOU don't find stories like this one often. There are parts of it that will make women want to weep and men want to fight.

The Man in The Case

By Mary Woodson Shippey

ILLUSTRATED BY R. F. JAMES



R. FORBES was sitting at his desk when Cray entered. He glanced up expectantly.

"My name is Cray," said Cray simply, as if repeating a password. Dr. Forbes motioned to a chair.

"From the O'Bannon Detective Agency?" he asked in a low voice, chewing his cigar nervously.

"Yes," said Cray.

There was a little silence. During it Cray took stock of Dr. Forbes. He was youngish and not bad-looking, in a weak, selfish sort of way. His face was a trifle too fleshy and his lips a trifle too thick and his teeth a trifle too sharp, but he had a well-shaped head and large, languorous eyes.

Dr. Forbes, in his half-furtive scrutiny, saw a mild, inoffensive-looking young man with gentle blue eyes and a wide, pleasant mouth.

"I told them to send me the-best-"
hesitated Dr. Forbes.

Cray smiled a little, quite unoffended.
"I have handled all the important cases for the last two years," he said

"I—er—I have rather a delicate mission for you," said Dr. Forbes, as if at a loss as to how to begin. "I want you to go down here in the country and—and hang around—"

"And hang around?" prompted Cray, patiently.

"Well,"—Dr. Forbes moistened his lips,—"I want you to go down to my country-place and—hang around. I want to know if my wife has any—visitors."

The fire of the zealot was beginning to kindle in the pale eyes of Cray.

"You have reason to suspect your wife

A brutal little smile played around Dr. Forbes' lips.

"I very much want to find out that she is," he said frankly. He lowered his voice still more. "I want a divorce," he said roughly, "and—custody of my child."

Cray sighed, resignedly. Same old story. He wondered at the office's wasting him on it. Forbes must have been willing to pay well.

"I—have no other—grounds." Dr. Forbes again moistened his lips. "You understand how it is?"

"Perfectly," said Cray. "You wish to marry again!"

Dr. Forbes had evidently received a jolt.

"Why do you say that?" he demanded, not very pleasantly.

"One hears gossip nearly every day of one's life," said Cray, naïvely.

Dr. Forbes thought this over. Then he seemed to make up his mind.

"I don't deny that I wish to marry again," he said, looking hard at the end of his cigar. "My wife and I have not been very-congenial for some time. But I'm very fond of the child-"

"But surely she has faults-other than this?" said Cray. He didn't want the

case at all.

"Not many," said Dr. Forbes. He added, vehemently: "She's too goodthat's just it!"

"But have you reason to believe she isn't faithful?" persisted Cray. He didn't want to go on a wild-goose chase ending in failure.

Dr. Forbes snarled.

"No woman remains good long if her husband neglects her!" he snapped. "Besides," he added, rummaging suddenly in a drawer, "she's too good-looking to suffer all forlorn."

He handed Cray a photograph with a little of his burnt-out pride. Cray stared

at the woman in silence.

"She doesn't know," said Dr. Forbes uneasily, "and she's not to know, of course. It'll be worth about a thousand dollars extra if you can prove she haser-visitors-"

"Now, let me get it straight, so I wont make any stupid bobbles," said Cray smoothly, still looking at the photograph: "You want a divorce in order to marry again. You want evidence sure to give you custody of your child. Your wife does not suspect you in the least of being unfaithful to her-"

Dr. Forbes was breathing hard. Cray gave him a fleeting, piercing glance.

"Right?" asked Cray.

"Right."

"You wish me to spy on your wife and find what little irregularities her loneliness may tempt her into, so you can get this divorce. I suppose your wife would never consent to release you otherwise-" He hesitated, hopefully.

"I should say not," cried Dr. Forbes in an oddly choked voice. "She'd think it a crime to suggest such a thing."

"Very well. Is there anything I

haven't understood?"

"No," said Dr. Forbes; "I merely want you to get the intimate details of

her days and nights. I want to know who goes to my house and how long they stay. After you've found that out, you can come home." Dr. Forbes eyed Cray a moment, doubtfully. "She is pretty, he said abruptly. "I want no mistakes."

Cray's blue eyes stared back at him steadily.

"Mistakes are not in my line," he returned pleasantly, and arose at once.

Dr. Forbes narrowed his eyes. "I want proofs!" he snapped.

"I understand," said Cray, and after asking about directions and trains, he

left the office willingly.

That night he caught the train for Greenfield, the village near the physician's country-place. Cray felt uncommonly loath. These were the sort of cases he despised. They seemed like a prostitution of his craft, and he always dreaded them. This one seemed especially repugnant and cold-blooded to him, not only because he knew Dr. Forbes' reputation, but because the woman in the picture seemed not the sort of person to spy upon at all.

"If she isn't awfully good, she'll be awfully clever," thought Cray. "And

I don't like these cases."

WHEN Cray slouched off the train in the early morning light, there was no one at the little station except the telegraph-operator. The whole face of the countryside was sparkling with dew. and even the slumberous hills in the distance seemed to glitter with it. It had been a long time since Cray had been in the country. He had almost forgotten what it was like. It seemed very fresh and beautiful to him, and very pleasant.

When he had deposited his baggage at the little hotel and found it would be some time until breakfast, he yielded to the call of the joyous, bird-filled out-ofdoors and struck out briskly along the road to Dewwood, the Forbes place. He would just have time for a nice walk and a look over the ground before break-

fast.

As he strode along, his mind turning over the points in his case, one of his molars seemed suddenly to try to leap out of his mouth. After a few agonizing moments, it as abruptly ceased to ache. "Lord, if that thing goes to cutting

up!" muttered Cray.

He had walked a good half-mile, drinking in the fresh, cool air, before it leaped again, this time with such vehemence that tears stood in his eyes. He buried his face in his hands and rocked back and forth. When the paroxysm passed, Cray, with a maddened desire to tear the tooth out with his bare fingers, fearfully walked another half-But after all it caught him unawares and with such violence that he dropped weakly on a log by the side of the road and clasped his jaw in his

As he writhed in pain, Cray saw with dismay a woman, a child and a dog round the turn in the road. Cray's misery was too deep, and he was too conscious of his ridiculous attitude, to care who they were. He merely humped himself over and hid his face in his hands, praying they would pass him by. But in a second the inquisitive dog was sniffing at his heels, and the boy stood on the lush grass close beside him.

"Oh Moth-er, hurry!" the youngster called. "I think he's cryin', Moth-er!"

The woman hastened up to Cray. "Are you ill, or in trouble?" she asked

anxiously.

Cray uncovered his face. Then he stood up and uncovered his head. There could be no doubt about it: this was the' very woman he had come to spy upon! She would have just that sort of voice. She stood before him, fresh and clean and glorious, like the morning, with a beautiful anxiety in her gentle eyes. Her dress was simple and crisp and white, and she wore a floppy sun-hat with a huge pink rose on it. She was that sort of woman.

Cray suddenly knew that wherever she went she took with her that curious air of cleanliness and purity, and made one think, inevitably, of roses and tumbling, dimpled babies and sweet perfumes and happiness and-home! No wonder she and Dr. Forbes had not been-er-very congenial for some time. She was very lovely-and only very good, thought

"It's only my ridiculous tooth," said Cray, smiling shamefacedly. "At times

it aches incredibly. I-I felt just now as if I couldn't stand it another minute. It's better now."

Her eves were still sympathetically

tender and anxious.

"I'm so sorry," she said earnestly. "I know how it is. I had a toothache once for a week. I have never forgotten. Can't I do something for you? Wont you come up to my house-

"Thanks," said Cray hastily, "but I think I'll go back to town and rout out

the dentist-

"But there is no dentist," she cried regretfully. "It's too bad. The one that comes twice a week was here only yesterday. You'll suffer dreadfully, I'm afraid. It's a long way back, and home is just around the turn there. You must come. I'll give you some camphor or something."

Her low voice was soothing and comforting. Suddenly Cray didn't want to go with her. Here, almost at once, he had met the woman he had thought he might have to scheme days to meet, and she was asking him to her home-and yet, passionately, Cray didn't want to go as a recipient of kindness at her hands, under the circumstances.

"I hate to bother," he mumbled.

"Why, it's no bother at all," she cried, laughing a little. "And you'd better come. Drew and I were just out for a dawn-ramble, as we call it." She was moving slowly toward the turn in the road, and Cray, reluctantly, began to follow her. "We take them often," she said, smiling at him over her shoulder. "We -we have a theory that it's good for all ailments, mental and physical-don't we, Drew? The-the whole world seems so fresh and young and hopeful. It seems almost like a daily chance to-begin life all over again-" She broke off abruptly. "I hope you don't think me silly," she said, with a sidewise glance at Cray.

Cray smiled back at her in a frank,

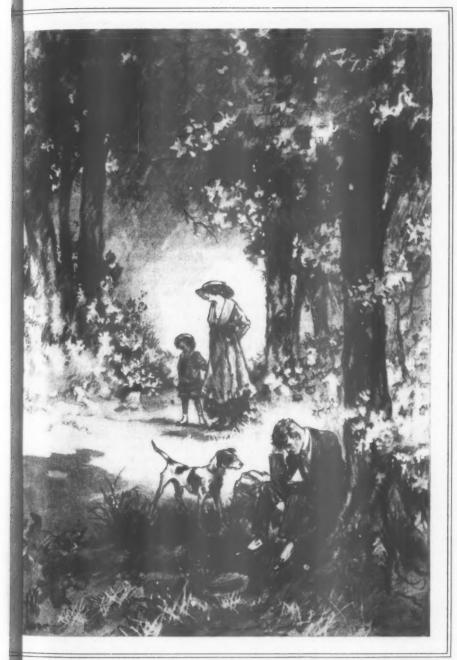
pleasing way.

"I think maybe I understand," he said. "I love it too-the young day, you know. I often walk-"

"Moth-er, is he a tramp?" asked the child, tugging at her skirt.

Cray laughed aloud.

"Well, a kind of tramp, Sonny," he



Cray humped himself over and hid his face in his hands, praying they would pass him by.

said. "You see, my health sort of ran away from me in the big city, and I couldn't find it anywhere. So I-I came down to the country to-have a look around. I thought it might be hiding behind a haystack somewhere-" Cray caught her eyes on his, with pity in them. He hated himself and his tale, bitterly. "I-I write a great deal," he said, halftruthfully, to her, "-although there isn't much I write ever gets printed." He hated himself still more when he saw the kindly interest kindle in her eyes.

"I knew as soon as you spoke that you were some one unusual and interesting,"

she said softly.

"Lord!" said Cray's cowering little

"Well, what's your name?" asked the child, with the directness of childhood; "an' what's your h-healf-"

He looked up at Cray with Dr. Forbes' own languorous dark eyes. Cray took his moist little hand and held it tight.

"My name is Cray," he said, smiling down at the youngster; "and when I was little, like you, my nice, pretty motherlike yours—used to call me Freddy Cray. And my enemies, - you know, my fighters,-they used to call me Fraidy Cray. And I had a great, big black dog named-let's see-" Suddenly Cray dropped the child's hand to hold his jaw again. "Mm," he said with a deep frown, "how that aches!"

The woman hurried her footsteps. "It is too bad!" she said sympathetically.

THE house was just the sort of house such a woman would have. It was dainty and homey, with dark, polished floors and wide, cool vistas and thin, white curtains-and roses everywhere. Never had Cray seen a more complete meaning for the word home. Waiting limply on the steps of the broad porch, his keen eyes darted about, taking stock of everything. The house was a broad, one-story bungalow affair. Judiciously hidden, he could see and hear outside any of the windows. As he cursed at the treachery, Mrs. Forbes returned with the camphor.

"An' what was the big dog's name?" asked the child, edging up a little nearer. He looked at Cray again, solemnly, out of the ludicrously Forbes-like eyes.

Cray branched out from a tale of the wonderful and fearful animal into a tale about himself, trumped up out of nothing at all. His quick wits had been at work framing a plausible reason for himself, since he had been so promptly lucky. He said his health was very poor-he knew he was thin and pale enough to warrant this—and that he had always been an inveterate bookworm-which was the truth-and that his career-to-be as a writer was suffering-which wasn't. His physician had told him it was imperative for him to be in the country for a while, and he had just stopped at Greenfield because he liked the name of the place. Cray could be very guileless and convincing.

Mrs. Forbes, with slim hands clasped in her lap, red lips parted and eyes wide with concern, sat and listened. Cray had wisely chosen the most vulnerable "Open sesame" to her friendliness. She was trustful and credulous and tender, with the big, impulsive heart inevitable with such a nature. It had been ridiculously easy, this gaining a foothold in the heart of the family life at Dewwood. But to be surer, Cray sighed and said, boyishly, that he hadn't a relative in the world

and was very lonely at times.

"That's dreadful," said Mrs. Forbes, her eyes darkening with pain. "I know! I am-lonely so much of the time myself." She added, hastily, loyally: "Dr. Forbes, my husband, is very busy. His practice is enormous. He is always so good and generous about the baby and me coming here for the summer-I suppose I ought not to complain, but Iwe miss him."

Forbes' face when he said she was "too good" arose before Cray's eyes. He swallowed hard. Nevertheless he played his trump card without winking. He had been waiting for her to mention her husband's name.

"Dr. Forbes!" he cried. "Do you mean to tell me that you are Mrs. Why, Dr. Forbes is my Forbes? physician!"

Her whole face bloomed, just as Cray guessed it would. And after that she seemed unable to do enough for him.

But when the maid announced breakfast, he declined positively to stay, although Mrs. Forbes urged him. He had an unaccountable feeling that a bite to eat beneath her roof would choke him.

"You've been too kind already," he protested. "But I'd like to come back, some time, and—sample your books, and—play with the boy. I'm trying to write a series of kid stories, and he's a wonder! I'd—like to play with him for—ideas."

"Do come!" cried Mrs. Forbes, with just the proper amount of cordiality. "There are so many books, and I'm sure Drew would like nothing better than some one to play with. It will really be a help to me, too, to know he's safe with you. There are times when I'm—I'm very busy—"

Somehow, from her tone, Cray drew the preposterous conclusion that her preoccupation had to do with tears.

"Yes," said the child aggrievedly, "an' when Moth-er gets awful busy, she always locks her do-or."

Mrs. Forbes' beautifully courteous good-by held no hint of coquetry, nor did the steady gaze of her kind eyes. Only the shadow of a hidden grief lay deep in them, a shadow that made Cray's heart ache for her. Yes, surely, she was only very good.

THAT night the detective returned to Dewwood to see what might be discovered. The house was dark, with no sounds save the peevish voice of the tired child and the low-spoken tenderness of the mother. There were absolutely no visitors, though Cray hid in the black shadows, listening and staring at the stars, until midnight. When he returned to the village, it was with a sick feeling of sneakiness and the thought of what a horrible business his was, anyway. He had never thought of it quite in that light before,

The next morning, when he sauntered in at the gate of Dewwood, the child was in a swing. A glorious romp ensued, and then Cray carried him off to a remote corner and plied him with adroit questions. It was all part of his business there, and yet he felt unreasonably angry for having it to do, and—he learned ab-

solutely nothing to the discredit of Mrs.

In the afternoon, with a book under his arm and with all the outward appearance of taking a short-cut through the place, Cray stumbled on a tea-party, in a pretty, secluded, English-looking nook. Two men and Mrs. Forbes! Cray mentally pricked up his ears.

Mrs. Forbes met his carefully played diffidence with a smile. She welcomed him without embarrassment and presented him to her guests quite as if he were an old friend. She was frankness itself and looked wonderfully lovely to the shamed eyes of Cray. What a woman she was! What a fool this Forbes must be! But he made a mental note that the men called her by her first name and that she went to the house with one, when they were leaving, to the evident displeasure of the other. Perhaps, after all, she was only very clever.

After the men had departed,—they had come in a car from a town ten miles away, it developed,—Cray and Mrs. Forbes had a long talk over the empty teacups, beginning with friends and going to children and books, and after a while, when the shadows were growing long, they spoke softly of loneliness again, and of love and loyalty.

The changing lights on Mrs. Forbes' white face and the changing lights in her wonderful eyes were again poignantly sad, making Cray's heart ache for her anew. And that night, during his secret vigil, he heard sounds which shook him: a woman's choked sobs in the darkness somewhere—hard sobs, with little, piteous sighs.

IN a few days Dr. Forbes began to nag him. He wrote that he wished Cray to take what time was necessary but to make it as brief as possible. Cray wrote him flippantly to remember how good she was, and that he had found out nothing so far.

For a week after that Cray managed to visit Dewwood every day, in addition to his stealthy visits at night. Sometimes he found sweet, full summer solitude and saw no one save the servants. Sometimes he found guests. They came often in motor-cars, sometimes in numbers,

sometimes only one or two. They were frank, charming, well-mannered men and women—just the sort of people such a woman would attract and choose for friends. At times jolly parties of them stayed overnight, when Mrs. Forbes dimpled and bloomed, full of a delightful hospitality.

Cray, who was occasionally invited to meals, heard her apologize often for the absence of Dr. Forbes. Her guests at such times exchanged pitying glances.

In the city, Dr. Forbes fretted and champed and hurried Cray by almost every mail. And it was quite characteristic of Cray that, once having undertaken the case, he stuck to it with dogged determination, despite his growing dislike of it. However, though he hated to fail, he felt a certain contrary pride in the wife's integrity as he wrote each report of his utter frustration. Sometimes, with all his heart, as his deep respect for her grew, he wanted to make a clean breast of his object there and point out what a wretch Forbes was and beg her to steal away with the child. He wanted to save her the shock and heart-break in store for her, and he felt his own betraval of her keenly.

AND then one night, when there were guests, among them those whom Cray had met that first day, Cray, skulking beside the dark porch, while those within laughed and chattered, heard something which stabbed him and sent him stumbling away with the tears of a deep hurt standing in his eyes. He spent a wild night and a wilder day. He didn't go near Dewwood, not even after dark. He walked long and far, wearing himself out, biting innumerable cigars to pieces, his hands clenched deep in his pockets, thinking deeply. He read all night, for he could not close his eyes without seeing her piteous face, smiling, sad, wistful, painfully drawn and weary.

In the morning Cray got an angry letter from Dr. Forbes. It ordered him either to get results or come home. It hinted vilely at his motives in staying, twitted him with his failure, jeered at his professional ability. Cray quite lost his head. He smote the letter with his

fist and spat upon it. So he wanted results, did he? And proofs? Very well. Cray could play a last despicable card he had cast out of his mind again and again. He could try that, and if he failed, why then—what better proofs than that she had listened to him?

Perhaps Forbes was right. Perhaps no woman was good but the one untempted. She felt horribly lonely and neglected. He knew that. He knew more. He knew suspicion was growing in her heart, and a dreadful terror and a longing for comfort. Cray would tempt her once more, with all the skill he had, and in a hitherto untried way. Furiously, recklessly, he went to Dewwood to play his last card.

Mrs. Forbes was braiding a clover chain for the child. They both cried a joyous welcome to him. Cray's angry heart smote him. He realized how horribly he was betraying them both. Quietly he came up to them. His face was pale,

his eyes hollow.

"You've been ill," cried Mrs. Forbes reproachfully, anxiously, as he sat on the

grass beside her.

"Only the tooth," lied Cray with his crooked smile. "Here, Drew, your mother's clovers are gone. Go get her some more."

The child hugged him tempestuously before darting off to a fresh clover-

patch.

"I'm going home to-morrow," said

Cray, watching her narrowly.

He fancied Mrs. Forbes looked startled. He was, himself. He had not known until that moment that he intended to go.

"I'm so sorry," she cried regretfully.
"Must you? We certainly will miss you.
You've been so good and kind—"

Cray looked hard at the child in the clover-patch. There was a clear, clean blue sky overhead; there was bright sunshine, and trees and flowers and grass. It was all so peaceful—everywhere. Why couldn't there be peace for the tender, mothering, scorned woman at his side, for the little happy, playing child? It was wrong—all, all wrong.

"Mrs. Forbes," he said, "you can't ever know what knowing Dewwood and —you has meant to me—" He stumbled,

deliberately, still watching her closely. "I wish," she said, ever so gently, "that you did not have to go."

Cray glanced away quickly. He had come to play, carefully, a cruel part. Was he going to succeed?

"Would you be glad if I stayed?" he asked softly.

"Why, of course," she said in a sensible sort of way. "You should, I think. You need several more months of it."

Cray ruthlessly tore the heads off two or three clovers.

"It isn't the country I need any more," he said quite savagely, still watching her shrewdly. "It's a home and a-child and a-a wife-like-you-"

Mrs. Forbes laughed a little, low

laugh.

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"Oh," she said earnestly, "I hope Mrs. You will be a much better woman than I am. And what a devoted lover you'll make!" Cray noticed she didn't say hus-band. "You know I've often thought, since I've known you, that I hope Drew will grow up to be your sort of man. You're so incredibly thoughtful and kind to women."

"Don't!" said Cray, suddenly covering his face with his hands. "How do you know what kind of man-"

"Mother-folks get very analytical," said Mrs. Forbes, her great mothereyes dreaming on the child. "We read people better than you'd think. So you just can't make me believe you're a villain," she added lightly, smiling at "When you try, you only make me think you're-younger than you look."

Cray stared at the little clouds of hair against the hollow of her pale, slender cheek, at the quiet, patient eyes, and puzzled over her. She seemed so pure, so remote, so unattainable. And yet, she had fire; he knew that. And then the thought of what he had overheard stabbed him. His throat ached at the memory. Good? Yes, and-very

"I feel," he said, in a low voice, "as if I were a spoiled child. You've been so good to me. I've come to know you so well that I-nobody in the world would ever do for me now but you." He stopped abruptly.

Mrs. Forbes gave him a quick, startled glance. It was real-no doubt about that. Cray met her eyes, and his nostrils widened. He knew how to behave to per-

"Yes," he said, roughly, defiantly, "I mean just what you see in my eyes.

"Boy," said Mrs. Forbes, incredulously, "are you making love to me?" A little amused twinkle came into her eyes, but her mouth did not smile. treated his declaration with a sweet respect. "That's all nonsense. mustn't do it," she said, again in her sensible, disarming way. "It's like a schoolboy in love with his teacher. You're just sick and weak and want a little mothering. You fancy I've been good to you; that's all it is!"

"I know what I want," said Cray, still roughly, suddenly tilting his hat over his eyes. "I know for me now there can never be but one woman."

"Boy," said Mrs. Forbes, a little severely this time, "don't you see you're not being very honorable, and that I can't listen to you? Don't be silly. Can't you understand how it is? Don't you realize that when people love each other enough to marry, they give themselves to each other-

"But what if-" began Cray, with the truth again trembling on his lips.

"It's not quite so all-in-all with men, perhaps," she interrupted, almost as if anticipating him; and she turned her face away. "But it must be so for Don't you see? A woman's very, very happy time lasts such a little while. After that her life is just-getting used to things. It's just her job to keep the fires burning. Not the hearthfire alone, but all the fires. If she doesn't, she's failed as a wife somewhere." Her tone seemed tinged with bitterness and self-accusation. "And if it weren't for the feeling that she belonged, she couldn't always bring herself to try to keep the fires. Sometimes she couldn't bear the thought that-I mean, she might be able to forget. So, you see," she ended hurriedly, in a little pitiful scurry, "it's the very best way."

And Cray, shaking with pity for her, stood ashamed before the woman's white,

troubled soul.

"FRAIDY CRAY, Fraidy Cray," shrilled the child, running toward them. "I've found a nest, Fraidy Cray;

I've found a nest!"

Cray got to his feet and caught the running child. He swung him high over his head. He was almost unaware of what he was doing. He knew only that he was suddenly at a loss, horribly embarrassed, and that his voice was lost somewhere and he was trying vainly to find it.

"I'm going away, Drew," he found himself saying at length, crazily. "You miss me a lot, d'you hear, Drew? You miss me a lot!" He hugged the child wildly. "It'll all come right!" he told

him, oddly.

"It isn't," said Mrs. Forbes, with suddenly brimming eyes, as Cray bade her good-by, "that I don't want love. God knows I need all I can get. Anybody does," she added with that quick loyalty. "And I don't want you to forget me. I want you to go on loving me all you can —without loving me wrong."

Cray looked at her strangely.

"I sha'n't forget you!" he said, again oddly.

THAT night Cray slipped out into the darkness of the cool, soft night and went to Dewwood for one last look around, for one last good-by. He wanted to be very sure of what he must report. Creeping in at the familiar gate, life, as his sophistication knew it, seemed a very bitter mockery. His breath hurried through his lips at the thought of Mrs. Forbes in that dark house, fighting her lone fight, almost beaten.

From sheer force of habit Cray circled the house. Little whispering sounds told

him there were guests.

The windows of Mrs. Forbes' bedroom were plunged in darkness, as was the rest of the house. But even before he reached them, Cray heard her rich, low voice, speaking passionately. Trembling, eager, Cray stooped by the window-sill and listened. Suddenly, as if unable to endure more, he flung up his head.

"Oh, my God," he muttered, and began to run. Noiselessly, Cray ran over the grass, out into the road.

EARLY the following morning Cray caught the train out of Greenfield, and late in the afternoon he presented himself at the office of Dr. Forbes. His face was sharp and haggard and weary.

"Mr. Cray," said Dr. Forbes, very professionally, from his private-office door. Cray followed him in. Dr. Forbes' hands trembled as he locked the

door.

"What did you find out?" he de-

manded huskily.

Briskly, Cray produced the photograph of Mrs. Forbes which he had taken with him. He placed it on top of the desk by a large photograph of a handsome woman who wore a much-beplumed hat and whose ample shoulders were bare. She had the eyes of a vixen and a large, sensual mouth. Mrs. Forbes looked very aristocratic and thorough-bred beside her. She gazed at them, her small head held proudly, her fine brow pure, unruffled, her eyes steadfast and wistful. Dr. Forbes glanced away from them quickly.

"There's your picture," said Cray, in an offhand way. "And now, let's see." He produced copious notes. "Here is a list of daily events, as nearly as I could

find out. Shali I read them?"

"Not unless they're — interesting," leered Dr. Forbes.

Cray hesitated for the fraction of a second.

"These are the visitors, male and female, while I was there," he said quietly.

Dr. Forbes seized the list eagerly and read. He flung it down furiously.

"Brothers, cousins, uncles, aunts and a lot of fools as harmless as old maids!" he ejaculated. "What the devil! Is that all, after nearly a month?"

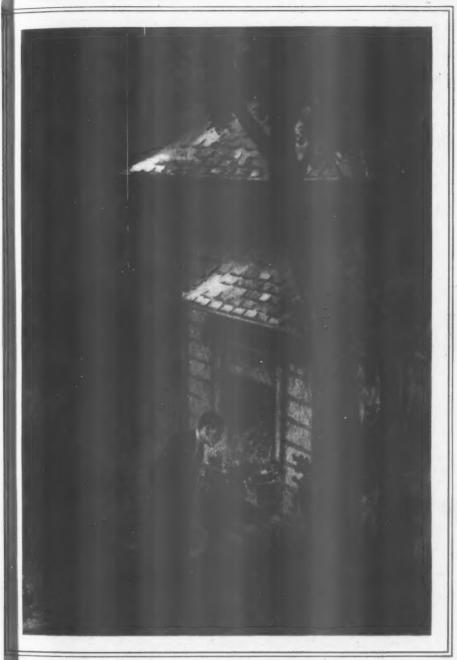
"No," said Cray pleasantly, "I found that she loved some one—"

"Does he care for her?"
"I think so," said Cray.

"Ah," cried Dr. Forbes triumphantly.
"You see? Just neglect them a little!
There isn't a good woman in the world!"

"This affair seemed to be—entirely on the square," said Cray. He lowered his tired eyes.

"The devil!" jeered Dr. Forbes. Cray cleared his throat.



Trembling, eager, Cray stooped by the window-sill and listened.

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"But once," he said in a flat voice, "when she had guests, I listened by the porch and heard her say: me close, darling, and kiss me again. God must have known I'd need you, and that's why He lets me have you for my own. He must have known how much you'd mean to me. When I am lonely, just the feel of your arms keeps megood and safe and sane. It can't be wrong to love you so. Sometimes, with my heart aching past endurance, to feel yours beating against it gives me courage to go on a little longer. And you always seem to know just when I need you, and to come-" "

"Ah," ejaculated Dr. Forbes, in an odd voice, a queer exultation and a mad jealousy fighting for mastery in his face. "Who was the man? Tell me

that!"

"Another time," said Cray in his most coldly businesslike voice, "I stood outside her bedroom window. I heard her say: 'If it weren't for you, I could not live. Many a time your dear presence robs me of almost physical pain. Always love me a lot. Don't ever stop loving, or forget me. I couldn't bear it. Our love for each other has somehow come to mean the biggest thing in the world, my darling, blotting out-everything else. It's so good to have each other to love. Think what we would have missed, you and I-'"

"Who was she talking to?" whispered Dr. Forbes furiously, close to Cray's

Cray eyed him levelly. He wore the look Dr. Forbes wore when probing the wound of a conscious patient to see how deep the trouble lay. All the exultation was gone from Dr. Forbes' face. Only murder-red jealousy remained. A sort of grim satisfaction crept into Cray's

"She was talking, Dr. Forbes," he said very coldly, "to your child!"

Dr. Forbes turned away suddenly

with a strange sound.

"Shall I read it over again?" asked Cray monotonously, "or did you get the drift of it? And shall I read you what your child said back to her?" He studied

the bowed back of Dr. Forbes a moment. contemptuously. "You're a bad lot, Dr. Forbes," he said suddenly, brazenly, "but you'd better go back to your wife and your baby!"

A little silence fell. Dr. Forbes still stood, his face hidden. Cray was trying to shut his teeth against the torrent of words that crowded his lips. Suddenly his pent-up pity for the lonely woman, and his earnest wish to help, pushed them out pell-mell, thrusting aside ethics and coolness and caution.

"You big brute!" he stormed at Dr. Forbes' back. "You big, heartless brute! Wouldn't your hiring me to spy on her, and your reason-wouldn't they make pretty reading in cold print? Wouldn't they? You'd better go back to your wife, and you'd better be square to her. If you don't, by the gods, I'm going to print them! And if I ever hear of your not treating her as a-a wife should be treated, I'll-I'll run you out of this town! Do you hear?"

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Dr. Forbes turned about. He tried to bluster, but his face was ashamed; his eves, which would not meet Cray's, were ashamed; his voice, when he spoke, was deeply ashamed, and more-contrite.

"No, no, Cray," he said, hoarsely. "I—I'll go back. You—you don't understand. I want to go back, Cray. I must have been dreaming. I must have been mad to have fancied I could ever care for anybody else. Cray, I never realized until this minute how dearly I-love my wife. I never realized until you said you had succeeded-" Then suddenly he cried out as if tortured by the thought: "Cray, you-you told me there was another man!"

"I merely said I found she was in love with some one."

"Then it's too late? How could I go back-Cray, how could she-"

"I told you it was on the level," said

"Cray, I must know! Who is this

Cray's eyes were steely as they met the cringing eyes of Dr. Forbes.

"Why, he is-you, yourself!" said the detective, very gruffly.

N this, his new novel of the great North, James Oliver Curwood writes of a hero who is neither a master of men nor of money. He is not a builder of great works. He does not astound society or fascinate women. But he is none the less a power. He is an overlord of vast stretches of earth. He is a monarch of lofty mountains. He is ruler of beautiful valleys. And he has a better-workedout philosophy of life than the wise men of the ages have found. All he wants is to be left alone.

This hero is a bear, a monster grizzly. One lovely June day, Thor, who like some mighty feudal lord of old has his domain in the fastnesses of high mountains, has come part way down his Canadian peaks to plunder. He has slept from fall to spring for many years. And

now, as in the years gone by, he is feeding through the sunny months to store up fat for the next long sleep. This has been his endless régime. So he proceeds to dig up a gopher for his heavy course and steal a little heap of ground nuts from a rock rabbit for his dessert. He is happy and con-

is happy and content. Other bears roam his mountains; so do big-horn sheep and lesser animals. He lives and lets live. He only fights when his rights are disputed and only kills when he wants food. But of a sudden, out of the South, comes destruction to the harmony of his days.

Jim Langdon, a writer, is exploring. He has with him Bruce Otto, a packer, and a pack-train with a camping outfit. They enter one of Thor's valleys and take a look around with their field-glasses.

glasses.
"I see three caribou up the valley," says Otto.
"I see a big-horn looking down from

"I see a big-horn looking down from the peak of that first mountain to the right," comments Langdon. "And I see a grizzly as big as a house

"And I see a grizzly as big as a house just beyond the ravine over there," says Otto again.

Langdon turns his glass to follow Otto's, "Gee, he's the biggest grizzly in the Rockies," he cries. "We'll camp here till we get him if it takes all summer."

Otto, who is an expert huntsman, gives Langdon the first chance at Thor. The wind is in their favor—so Langdon climbs the slope toward Thor without the great fellow getting scent of him. Suddenly Langdon looks up. A monster bulk of head and shoulder looms over him.

So Thor sees his first man. He is not afraid and he is not angry. His great lungs fill with the hot smell of him. He turns away in disgust, and speeds with a ball-like motion. Langdon scrambles wildly to the top and shoots. Otto joins him. All at once there is a hot pain in Thor's shoulder. He turns and roars defiance. Another whiplash of fire sears his gigantic back and he breaks for a divide

over which he plunges out of rifle

shot.

The great beast's hurts are more painful than serious. The bone has not been touched. So he makes for a ravine and his doctor, a clay wallow. He plunges in and turns his torn shoulder to the cooling mud till the wound is

closed—then heaves a great sigh of relief. He feels safe now, for that ravine leads to home, impenetrable thickets up in the mountain at its head, where he was born and where he dens-up every winter. He spends half the night in the clay bath, then toils up the ravine.

Langdon is crestfallen at his failure. But he is the more determined to get Thor now. The next morning, after a breakfast of warm bannock and broiled sheep steaks, he and Otto set out to find Thor. They come to his tracks in the mud. Langdon and Otto both exclaim in amazement and Langdon measures the tracks with a pocket tape.

"Fifteen and a quarter inches," he cries exultantly. "The biggest grizzly ever killed in British Columbia measured fourteen and a half, and this one beats

him."

A Complete Résumé of the opening installment of "The Grizzly," the New Novel by James Oliver Curwood A COMPLETE RÉSUMÉ of the opening installment of "The Grizzly" is on page 741.

The GRIZZLY

A new novel of the great outdoors

CHAPTER V

HOR had gone up the gorge at daybreak. He was stiff when he rose from the clay wallow, but a good deal of the burning and pain had gone from his wound. It still hurt him, but not as it had hurt him the preceding evening. His discomfort was not all in his shoulder, and it was not in any one place in particular. He was sick, and had he been human he would have been in bed with a thermometer under his tongue and a doctor holding his pulse. He walked up the gorge slowly and laggingly. An indefatigable seeker of food, he no longer thought of food. He was not hungry, and he did not want to eat.

With his hot tongue he lapped frequently at the cool water of the creek, and even more frequently he turned half about and sniffed the wind. He knew that the man-smell and the strange thunder and the still more inexplicable lightning lay behind him. All night he had been on guard, and he was cautious

For a particular hurt Thor knew of no particular remedy. He was not a botanist in the finer sense of the word, but in creating him, the Spirit of the Wild had ordained that he should be his own physician. As a cat seeks catnip, so

Thor sought certain things when he was not feeling well. All bitterness is not quinine, but certainly bitter things were Thor's remedies, and as he made his way up the gorge, his nose hung close to the ground, and he sniffed in the copses and thick bushtangles.

He came to a small green spot covered with kinnikinic, a ground-plant two inches high which bore red berries as big as a small pea. They were not red now, but green; they were bitter as gall, and contained an astringent tonic called uva-ursi. Thor ate them.

After that he found soap-berries growing on bushes that looked very much like currant bushes. The fruit was already larger than currants, and turning pink. Indians ate these berries when they had fever, and Thor gathered half a pint before he went on.





A BEAR IS THE HERO of this story, and he's as lovable a hero as you ever found in a novel.

By James Oliver Curwood

Author of "Kazan," "God's Countryand the Woman," etc.

ILLUSTRATED FRANK

He nosed the trees, and found at last what he wanted. It was a jackpine, and at several places within his reach the fresh pitch was oozing. A seldom passes a bleeding jackpine. It is his chief tonic, and Thor licked the fresh pitch his with tongue. In this way he ab-

sorbed not only turpentine but also, in a roundabout sort of way, a whole pharmacopæia of medicines made from this particular element.

By the time he arrived at the end of the gorge, Thor's stomach was a fairly well stocked drug emporium. Among other things he had eaten perhaps half a quart of spruce and balsam needles. When a dog is sick he eats grass; when a bear is sick he eats pine or balsam needles if he can get them. Also he pads his stomach and intestines with them in the last hour before denning himself away for the winter.

The sun was not yet up when Thor came to the end of the gorge and stood for a few moments at the mouth of a low cave that reached back into the wall of the mountain. How far his memory went back it would be impossible to say; but in the whole world as he knew it, this cave was home. It was not more than four feet high, and twice as wide, but it was many times as deep and was carpeted with a soft white floor of sand; in some past age a little stream had trickled out of it. The far end of this cavern made a comfortable bedroom for a sleeping bear when the temperature was fifty degrees below zero.

Ten years before, Thor's mother had gone in there to sleep through the winter, and when she waddled out to get her first glimpse of spring, three little cubs waddled with her. Thor was one of them. He was still half blind, for it is five weeks after a grizzly cub is born before he can see; and there was not much hair on his body, for a grizzly cub is born as naked as a human baby. His eyes opened and his hair began to grow at just about the same time.... Since then Thor had denned eight times in that cavern home.

He wanted to go in now. He wanted to lie down in the far end of it and wait until he felt better. For perhaps two or three minutes he hesitated, sniffing vearningly at the door to his cave, and then feeling the wind from down the gorge. Something told him that he should go on.

To the westward there was a sloping ascent up out of the gorge to the summit, and Thor climbed this. The sun

was well up when he reached the top, and for a little while he rested again and looked down on the other half of his domain.

Even more wonderful was this valley than the one into which Bruce and Langdon had ridden a few hours before. From range to range it was a good two miles in width, and in the opposite directions it stretched away in a great rolling panorama of gold and green and black. From where Thor stood, it was like immense park. Green slopes reached almost to the summits of the mountains, and to a point halfway up these slopes - the last

timber-line—clumps of spruce and balsam trees were scattered over the green as if set there by the hands of men. Some of these timber-patches were no larger than the decorative clumps in a city park, and others covered acres and tens of acres; and at the foot of the slopes on either side, like decorative fringes, were thin and unbroken lines of forest. Between these two lines of forest lay the open valley of soft and undulating meadow, dotted with its purplish bosks of buffalo willow and mountain sage, its green coppices of wild-rose and thorn, and its clumps of trees. In the hollow of the valley ran a stream.

Thor descended about four hundred yards from where he stood, and then turned northward along the green slope, so that he was traveling from patch to patch of the park-like timber, a hundred and fifty or two hundred yards above the fringe of forest. To this height, midway between the meadows in the valley and

the first shale and bare rock of the peaks, he came most frequently on his small-game hunts.

Like fat woodchucks, the whistlers were already beginning to sun themselves on their rocks. Their long, soft,

elusive whistlings, pleasant to hear above the drone of mountain waters, filled the air with a musical cadence. Now and then one would whistle shrilly and warningly close at hand, and then flatten himself out on his rock as the big bear passed, and for a few moments no whistling would break upon the gentle purring of the valley.

But Thor was giving no thought to the hunt this morn-

ing. Twice he encountered porcupines, the sweetest of all morsels to him; and passed them unnoticed; the warm, sleeping smell of a caribou came hot and fresh from a thicket, but he did not approach the thicket to investigate; out of a coulee, narrow and

dark, like a black ditch, he caught the scent of a badger. For two hours he traveled steadily northward along the half-crest of the slopes before he struck down through the timber to the stream.

The clay adhering to his wound was beginning to harden, and again he waded shoulder-deep into a pool, and stood there for several minutes. The water washed most of the clay away. For another two hours he followed the creek, drinking frequently. Then came the sapoos oowin - six hours after he had left the clay-wallow. The kinnikinic berries, the soap-berries, the jackpine pitch, the spruce and balsam needles, and the water he had drunk, all mixed in his stomach in one big compelling dose, brought it about-and Thor felt tremendously better, so much better that for the first time he turned and growled back in the direction of his enemies. His shoulder still hurt him, but his sickness was gone.

For many minutes after the sapoos oowin he stood without moving, and many times he growled. The snarling rumble deep in his chest had a new meaning now. Until last night and today, he had not known a real hatred. He had fought other bears, but the fighting-rage was not hate. It came quickly, and passed away quickly; it left no growing ugliness; he licked the wounds of a clawed enemy, and was quite frequently happy while he nursed them. But this new thing that was born in him was different.

With an unforgettable and ferocious hatred he hated the thing that had hurt him. He hated the man-smell; he hated the strange, white-faced thing he had seen clinging to the side of the gorge; and his hatred included everything associated with them. It was a hatred born of instinct and roused sharply from its long slumber by experience.

Without ever having seen or smelled man before, he knew that man was his deadliest enemy, and to be feared more than all the wild things in the mountains. He would fight the biggest grizzly. He would turn on the fiercest pack of wolves. He would brave flood and fire without flinching. But before man he must flee! He must hide! With eyes and ears and nose, he must constantly guard himself, in the peaks and on the plains. Why he sensed this, why he understood all at once that a creature had come into his world, a pigmy in size, yet more to be dreaded than any foe he had ever known, was a miracle which nature alone could explain. It was a hearkening back in the age-dimmed mental fabric of Thor's race to the earliest days of manman, first of all, with the club; man with the spear hardened in fire; man with the flint-tipped arrow; man with the trap and the deadfall; and lastly man with the gun. Through all the ages man had been his one and only master. Nature had impressed it upon him-had been impressing it upon him through a hundred or a thousand or ten thousand generations.

And now for the first time in his life that dormant part of his instinct leaped into warning wakefulness, and he understood. He hated man, and hereafter he would hate everything that bore the man-smell. And with this hate there was also born in him for the first time fear. Had man never pushed Thor and his kind to the death, the world would not have known him as Ursus Horribilis the Terrible.

THOR still followed the creek, nosing along slowly and lumberingly, but very steadily; his head and neck bent low, his huge rear quarters rising and falling in that rolling motion peculiar to all bears, and especially so to the grizzly. His long claws click-clicked on the stones; he crunched heavily in the gravel; in soft sand he left enormous footprints.

That part of the valley which he was now entering held a particular significance for Thor, and he began to loiter. pausing often to sniff the air on all sides of him. He was not a monogamist, but for many mating-seasons past he had come to find his Iskwao in this wonderful sweep of meadow and plain between the two ranges. He could always expect her in July, waiting for him or seeking him with that strange savage longing of motherhood in her breast. She was a splendid grizzly who came from the western ranges when the spirit of mating-days called-big and strong and of a beautiful golden brown color. so that the children of Thor and his Iskwao were the finest young grizzlies in all the mountains. The mother took them back with her unborn, and they opened their eyes and lived and fought in the valleys and on the slopes far to the west. If in later years Thor ever chased his own children out of his hunting grounds, or whipped them in a fight, Nature kindly blinded him to the fact. He was like most grouchy old bachelors: he did not like small folk. He tolerated a little cub as a cross-grained old woman-hater might have tolerated a pink baby-but he wasn't as cruel as Punch, for he had never killed a cub. He had cuffed them soundly whenever they had dared to come within reach of him, but always with the flat, soft palm of his paw, and with just enough force behind it to send them keeling over and over like little round fluffy balls.

This was Thor's only expression of displeasure when a strange mother-bear invaded his range with her cubs. In other ways he was quite chivalrous. He would not drive the mother-bear and her cubs away, and he would not fight with her, no matter how shrewish or unpleasant she was. Even if he found them eating at one of his kills, he would do nothing more than give the cubs a sound cuffing.

ALL this is somewhat necessary to show with what sudden and violent agitation Thor caught a certain warm, close smell as he came around the end of a mass of huge boulders. He stopped, turned his head and swore in his low, growling way. Six feet away from him, groveling flat in a patch of white sand. wriggling and shaking for all the world like a half-frightened puppy that had not yet made up its mind whether it had met a friend or an enemy, was a lone bear cub. It was not more than three months old-altogether too young to be away from its mother; and it had a sharp little tan face and a white spot on its baby breast, which marked it as a member of the black bear family, and not a grizzly.

The cub was trying as hard as it could to say, "I am lost, strayed or stolen; I'm hungry, and I've got a porcupine quill in my foot," but in spite of that, with another ominous growl Thor began to look about the rocks for the mother. She was not in sight, and neither could he smell her, two facts which turned his great head again to-

ward the cub.

Muskwa—an Indian would have called the cub that—had crawled a foot or two nearer on his little belly. He greeted Thor's second inspection with a genial wriggling which carried him forward another half foot, and a low warning rumbled in Thor's chest. "Don't come any nearer," it said plainly enough, "or I'll keel you over!"

Muskwa understood. He lay as if dead, his nose and paws and belly flat on the sand, and Thor looked about him again. When his eyes returned to Muskwa, the cub was within three feet of him, squirming flat in the sand and

whimpering softly. Thor lifted his right paw four inches from the ground. "Another inch, and I'll give you a welt!" he growled.

Muskwa wriggled and trembled; he licked his lips with his tiny red tongue, half in fear and half pleading for mercy, and in spite of Thor's lifted paw he wormed his way another six inches

nearer.

There was a sort of rattle instead of a growl in Thor's throat. His heavy hand fell to the sand. A third time he looked about and sniffed the air; he growled again. Any crusty old bachelor would have understood that growl. "Now where the devil is the kid's mother!" it said.

Something happened then. Muskwa had crept close to Thor's wounded leg. He rose up, and his nose caught the scent of the raw wound. Gently his tongue touched it. It was like velvetthat tongue. It was wonderfully pleasant to feel, and Thor stood there for many moments, making neither movement nor sound while the cub licked his wound. Then he lowered his great head. He sniffed the soft little ball of friendship that had come to him. Muskwa whined in a motherless way. Thor growled, but more softly now. It was no longer a threat. The heat of his great tongue fell once on the cub's face.

"Come on!" he said, and resumed his journey into the North.

And close at his heels followed the

motherless little tan-faced cub.

CHAPTER VI

THE creek which Thor was following was a tributary of the Babine, and he was headed pretty nearly straight for the Skeena. As he was traveling upstream, the country was becoming higher and rougher. He had come perhaps seven or eight miles from the summit of the divide when he found Muskwa. From this point the slopes began to assume a different aspect. They were cut up by dark, narrow gullies, and broken by enormous masses of rocks, jagged cliffs and steep slides of shale. The creek became noisier and more difficult to follow.



Like the wind Thor bore down on the flank of the caribou, swung a little to one side, and then without any apparent effort
—still like a huge ball—he bounded in and upward, and the short race was done.

Thor was now entering one of his strongholds: a region which contained a thousand hiding-places, if he had wanted to hide; a wild, up-torn country where it was not difficult for him to kill big game, and where he was certain that the man-smell would not follow him.

For half an hour after leaving the mass of rocks where he had encountered Muskwa, Thor lumbered on as if utterly oblivious of the fact that the cub was following. But he could hear him and

smell him.

Muskwa was having a hard time of it. His fat little body and his fat little legs were unaccustomed to this sort of journeying, but he was a game youngster, and only twice did he whimper in that half hour—once when he toppled off a rock into the edge of the creek, and again when he came down too hard on

the porcupine quill in his foot.

At last Thor abandoned the creek and turned up a deep ravine, which he followed until he came to a dip, or plateaulike plain, halfway up a broad slope. Here he found a rock on the sunny side of a grassy knoll, and stopped. It may be that little Muskwa's babyish friendship, the caress of his soft little red tongue at just the psychological moment, and his perseverance in following Thor had all combined to touch a responsive chord in the other's big brute heart, for after nosing about restlessly for a few moments. Thor stretched himself out beside the rock. Not until then did the utterly exhausted little tan-faced cub lie down, but when he did lie down, he was so dead tired that he was sound asleep in three minutes.

TWICE again during the early part of the afternoon the sapoos oowin worked on Thor, and he began to feel hungry. It was not the sort of hunger to be appeased by ants and grubs or even gophers and whistlers. It may be, too, that he guessed how nearly starved little Muskwa was. The cub had not once opened his eyes, and he still lay in his warm pool of sunshine when Thor made up his mind to go on.

It was about three o'clock, a particularly quiet and drowsy part of a late June or early July day in a Northern mountain valley. The whistlers had piped until they were tired, and lay squat out in the sunshine on their rocks; the eagles soared so high above the peaks that they were mere dots; the hawks, with meat-filled crops, had disappeared into the timber; goat and sheep were lying down far up toward the skyline, and if there were any animals of the grazing kind near, they were well fed and napping.

The mountain hunter knew that this was the hour when he should scan the green slopes and the open places between the clumps of timber for bears, and especially for flesh-eating bears.

It was Thor's chief prospecting-hour. Instinct told him that when all other creatures were well-fed and napping he could move more openly and with less fear of detection. He could find his game, and watch it. Occasionally he would kill a goat or a sheep or a caribou in broad daylight, for over short distances he could run faster than either a goat or a sheep, and as fast as a caribou. But chiefly he killed at sunset or in the darkness of early-evening.

THOR rose from beside the rock with a prodigious whoof that roused Muskwa. The cub got up, blinked at Thor and then at the sun, and shook himself until he fell down.

Thor eyed the black-and-tan mite a bit sourly. After the sapoos oowin he was craving red, juicy flesh, just as a very hungry man yearns for a thick porterhouse instead of lady-fingers or mayonnaise salad—flesh and plenty of it; and how he could hunt down and kill a caribou with that half-starved but very much interested cub at his heels puzzled him.

Muskwa himself seemed to understand and answer the question. He ran a dozen yards ahead of Thor; then stopped and looked back impudently, his little ears perked forward, and with the look in his face of a small boy proving to his father that he is perfectly qualified to go on his first rabbit hunt.

With another whoof Thor started along the slope in a spurt that brought him up to Muskwa immediately, and with a sudden sweep of his right paw he sent the cub rolling a dozen feet behind him, a manner of speech that said plainly enough: "That's where you belong if you're going hunting with me!"

Then Thor lumbered slowly on, eyes and ears and nostrils keved for the hunt. He descended until he was not more than a hundred vards above the creek, and he no longer sought out the easiest trail, but the broken rough and places. He traveled slowly and in a zigzag fashion, stealing cautiously around great masses of boulders, sniffing up each coulee that he came to, and investigating the timber clumps and windfalls.

At one time he would be so high up that he was close to the bare shale, and again so low down

that he walked in the sand and gravel of the creek. He caught many scents in the wind, but none that held or deeply interested him. Once, up near the shale, he smelled goat—but he never went above the shale for meat. Twice he smelled sheep, and late in the afternoon he saw a big ram looking down on him from a precipitous crag a hundred feet above.

Lower down, his nose touched the trails of porcupine, and often his head hung over the footprints of caribou as he sniffed the air ahead.

There were other bear in the valley too. Mostly these had traveled along the creek-bottom, showing they were blacks. Once Thor struck the scent of another grizzly, and he rumbled ill-humoredly.

Not once in the two hours after they left the sun-rock did Thor pay any apparent attention to Muskwa, who was growing hungrier and weaker as the day lengthened. No boy that ever lived was gamer than the little tan-faced cub. In the rough places he stumbled and

fell frequently; up places that Thor could make in a single step he had to fight desperately to make his way; three times Thor waded through the creek, and Muskwa half-drowned himself in following; he was battered and bruised and

wet, and his foot hurt him—but he followed. Sometimes he was close to Thor, and at others he had to run to catch up. The sun was setting when Thor at last found game. and Muskwa was almost dead.

He did not know why Thor flattened his huge bulk suddenly alongside a rock at the edge of a rough meadow, from which they could look down into a small hollow. He wanted to whimper, but he was afraid. And if he had ever wanted his mother at any time in his short life, he wanted her now. He could not understand why she had left him among

the rocks and had never come back; that tragedy Langdon and Bruce were to discover a little later. And he could not understand why she did not come to him now. This was just about his nursing hour before going to sleep for the night, for he was a March cub, and according to the most approved mother-bear regulations, should have had milk for another month.

He was what Metoosin, the Indian, would have called *munookow*—that is, he was very soft. Being a bear, his birth had not been like that of other animals. His mother, like all mother bears in a cold country, had brought him into life a long time before she had finished her winter nap in her den. He had come while she was asleep. For a month or six weeks after that, while he was still blind and naked, she had given him milk while she herself neither ate nor drank nor saw the light of day. At the end of



They headed up the creek-bottom, bending over from their saddles to look at every strip of sand they passed for tracks. They had not gone a quarter of a mile when Bruce gave a sudden exclamation, and stopped.

those six weeks she had gone forth with him from her den to seek the first mouthful of sustenance for herself. Not more than another six weeks had passed since then, and Muskwa weighed about twenty pounds. That is, he had weighed twenty pounds, but he was emptier now than he had ever been in his life, and probably weighed a little less.

THREE hundred yards below Thor was a clump of balsams, a small, thick patch that grew close to the edge of a miniature lake whose water crept around the farther end of the hollow. In that clump there was a caribouperhaps two or three. Thor knew that as surely as though he saw them. The wenipow or "lying down" smell of hoofed game was as different from the mechisoo or "grazing smell" to Thor as day from night. One hung elusively in the air, like the faint and shifting breath of a passing woman's scented dress and hair; the other came hot and heavy, close to the earth, like the odor of a broken bottle of perfume.

Even Muskwa now caught the scent as he crept up close behind the big grizzly and lay down.

For fully ten minutes Thor did not move. His eyes took in the hollow, the edge of the lake and the approach to the timber, and his nose gauged the wind as accurately as the pointing of a compass. The reason he remained quiet was that he was almost on the danger-line. In other words, the mountains and the sudden dip had formed a "split wind" in the hollow, and had Thor appeared fifty yards above where he now crouched, the keen-scented caribou would have got full wind of him.

With his little ears cocked forward and a new gleam of understanding in his eyes, Muskwa now looked upon his first lesson in game-stalking. Crouched so low that he seemed to be traveling on his belly, Ther moved slowly and noiselessly toward the creek, the huge ruff just forward of his shoulders standing out like the stiffened spine of a dog's back. Muskwa followed. For fully a hundred yards Thor continued his detour, and three times in that hundred yards he paused to sniff in the direction

of the timber. At last he was satisfied. The wind was full in his face, and it was rich with promise.

He began to advance, in a slinking, rolling, rock-shouldered motion, taking shorter steps now, and with every muscle in his great body ready for action. Within two minutes he reached the edge of the balsams, and there he paused again. The crackling of underbrush came distinctly. The caribou were up, but they were not alarmed. They were going forth to drink and graze.

Thor moved again, parallel to the sound. This brought him quickly to the edge of the timber, and there he stood. concealed by foliage, but with the lake and the short stretch of meadow in view. A big bull caribou came out first. His horns were half grown, and in velvet. A two-year-old followed, round and sleek and glistening like brown velvet in the sunset. For two minutes the bull stood alert, eyes, ears and nostrils seeking for danger-signals; at his heels the younger animal nibbled less suspiciously at the grass. Then, lowering his head until his antlers swept back over his shoulders, the old bull started slowly toward the lake for his evening drink. The two-year-old followed-and Thor came out softly from his hiding place.

For a single moment he seemed to gather himself — and then he started. Fifty feet separated him from the caribou. He had covered half that distance like a huge rolling ball when the animals heard him. They were off like arrows sprung from the bow. But they were too late. It would have taken a swift horse to beat Thor, and he had already gained momentum.

Like the wind he bore down on the flank of the two-year-old, swung a little to one side, and then without any apparent effort—still like a huge ball—he bounded in and upward, and the short race was done.

His huge right arm swung over the two-year-old's shoulder, and as they went down, his left paw gripped the caribou's muzzle like a huge human hand. Thor fell under, as he always planned to fall. He did not hug his victim to death. Just once he doubled up one of his hind legs, and when it went back, the

five knives it carried disemboweled the caribou. They not only disemboweled him, but twisted and broke his ribs as though they were of wood. Then Thor got up, looked around, and shook himself with a rumbling growl which might have been either a growl of triumph or an invitation for Muskwa to come to the feast

If it was an invitation, the little tanfaced cub did not wait for a second. For the first time he smelled and tasted the warm blood of meat. And this smell and taste had come at the psychological moment in his life, just as it had come in Thor's life years before. All grizzlies are not killers of big game. In fact, very few of them are. Most of them are chiefly vegetarians, with a meat diet of smaller animals, such as gophers, whistling marmots, and porcupines. Now and then chance makes of a grizzly a hunter of caribou, goat, sheep, deer and even moose. Such was Thor. And such, in days to come, would Muskwa beeven though he was a black and not of the family Ursus Horribilis Ord.

For an hour the two feasted, not in the ravenous way of hungry dogs, but in the slow and satisfying manner of gourmets. Muskwa, flat on his little paunch, and almost between Thor's huge forearms, lapped up the blood and snarled like a kitten as he ground tender flesh between his tiny teeth. Thor, as in all his food-seeking, hunted first for the tidbits-though the sapoos oowin had made him as empty as a room without furniture. He pulled out the thin leaves of fat from about the kidneys and bowels, and munched at yard-long strings of it, his eyes half closed.

The last of the sun faded, and darkness followed swiftly after the twilight. It was dark when they finished, and Muskwa was as wide as he was long.

THOR was the greatest of nature's conservators. With him nothing went to waste that was good to eat, and at the present moment, if the old bull caribou had deliberately walked within his reach, Thor in all probability would not have killed him. He had food, and his business was to store that food where it would be safe.

He went back to the balsam thicket. but the gorged cub now made no effort to follow him. He was vastly contented, and something told him that Thor would not leave the meat. Ten minutes later Thor verified his judgment by returning. In his huge jaws he caught the caribou at the back of the neck. Then he swung himself partly sidewise and began dragging the carcass toward the timber as a dog might have dragged a ten-pound slab of bacon.

The young bull probably weighed four hundred pounds. Had he weighed eight hundred, or even a thousand, Thor would still have dragged him-but had the carcass weighed that much he would have turned straight around

backed with his load.

In the edge of the balsams Thor had already found a hollow in the ground. He thrust the carcass into this hollow, and while Muskwa watched with a great and growing interest, he proceeded to cover it over with dry needles, sticks, a rotting tree-butt and a log. He did not rear himself up and leave his "mark" on a tree as a warning to other bears. He simply nosed round for a bit, and then went out of the timber.

Muskwa followed him now, and he had some trouble in properly navigating himself under the handicap of his added weight. The stars were beginning to fill the sky, and under these stars Thor struck straight up a steep and rugged slope that led to the mountain-tops. Up and up he went, higher than Muskwa had ever been. They crossed a patch of snow. And then they came to a place where it seemed as if a volcano had disrupted the bowels of a mountain. Man could hardly have traveled where Thor led Muskwa.

At last he stopped. He was on a narrow ledge, with a perpendicular wall of rock at his back. Under him fell away the chaos of torn-up rock and shale. Far below, the valley lay a black and bottom-

Thor lay down, and for the first time since his hurt in the other valley, he stretched out his head between his great arms and heaved a deep and restful sigh. Muskwa crept up close to him, so close that he was warmed by Thor's body;

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Bruce still held the knife in his hand, and there was an odd expression in his face.

and together they slept the deep and peaceful sleep of full stomachs, while over them the stars grew brighter, and the moon came up to flood the peaks and the valley in a golden splendor.

CHAPTER VII

ANGDON and Bruce crossed the summit into the westward valley in the afternoon of the day Thor left the clay wallow. It was two o'clock when Bruce turned back for the three horses, leaving Langdon on a high ridge to scour the surrounding country through his glasses. For two hours after the packer returned with the outfit, they followed slowly along the creek above which the grizzly had traveled, and when they camped for the night they were still two or three miles from the spot where Thor came upon Muskwa. They had not yet found his tracks in the sand of the creek-bottom. Yet Bruce was confident. He knew that Thor had been following the crests of the slopes.

"If you go back out of this country an' write about bears, don't make a fool of yo'rself like most of the writin' fellows, Jimmy," he said, as they sat back to smoke their pipes after supper. "Two years ago I took a natcherlist out for a month, an' he was so tickled he said he'd send me a bunch o' books about bears an' wild things. He did! I read 'em. I laffed at first, an' then I got mad an' made a fire of 'em. Bears is cur'ous. There's a mighty lot of interestin' things to say about 'em without making a fool of yo'rself. There sure is!"

Langdon nodded.

"One has to hunt and kill and hunt and kill for years before one discovers the real pleasure in big-game stalking," he said slowly, looking into the fire. "And when he comes down to that real pleasure, the part of it that absorbs him heart and soul, he finds that after all the big thrill isn't in killing, but in letting live. I want this grizzly, and I'm going to have him. I wont leave the mountains until I kill him. But on the other hand, we could have killed two other bears to-day, and I didn't take a shot. I'm learning the game, Bruce—

I'm beginning to taste the real pleasure of hunting. And when one hunts in the right way, one learns facts. You needn't worry. I'm going to put only facts in what I write."

Suddenly he turned and looked at

Bruce.

"What were some of the 'fool things' you read in those nature books?" he asked.

Bruce blew out a cloud of smoke reflectively.

"What made me maddest," he said, "was what those writer fellows said about bears havin' 'marks.' Good Lord, accordin' to what they said, all a bear has to do is stretch 'imself up, put a mark on a tree, and that country is hisn until a bigger bear comes along an' licks 'im. In one book I remember where a grizzly rolled a log up under a tree so he could stand on it an' put his mark above another grizzly's mark. Think of that!

"No bear makes a mark that means anything. I've seen grizzlies bite hunks out o' trees an' scratch 'em just as a cat might, and in the summer when they get itchy an' begin to lose their hair, they stand up an' rub against trees. They rub because they itch an' not because they're leavin' their cards for other bear. Caribou an' moose an' deer do the same thing to get the velvet off their horns.

"Them same writers think every grizzly has his own range, an' they don't—"not by a long shot they don't! I've seen eight full-grown grizzlies feedin' on the same slide! You remember, two years ago, we shot four grizzlies in a little valley that wasn't a mile long. Now an' then there's a boss among grizzlies, like this fellow we're after—but even he aint got his range alone. I'll bet there's twenty other bear in these two valleys! An' that natcherlist I had two years ago couldn't tell a grizzly's track from a black bear's track, an' so 'elp me if he knew what a cinnamon was!"

He took his pipe from his mouth and spat truculently into the fire, and Langdon knew that other things were coming. His richest hours were those when the usually silent Bruce fell into these moods.

Continued on page 817 of this issue.



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The Foremost Humorist in America

ILLUSTRATED BY REA IRVIN



N the night of June twentythird Philo Gubb, paperhanger and graduate of the Rising Sun Detective Bureau's Correspondence School of Detecting, was extremely tired. It was a hot night in Riverbank, and all day Mr. Gubb had been at work papering the walls of the First M. E. Church, using the wallpaper known as Dietz's 6582 JM, which was a heavily embossed conventional fleur-de-lis design on paper almost as thick as cardboard. On account of its thickness, the paper was remarkably hard to handle, insisting on retaining the curl it had acquired in the roll; and it was necessary for Mr. Gubb to use glue instead of paste in applying the paper to the wall. In experimenting with paste of various thicknesses, Mr. Gubb had wasted most of the day, and at six o'clock he had not managed to glue Dietz's 6582 JM to more than one-fourth of the

He was quite exhausted by his labor and had just climbed down from his scaffold when the Reverend Orley Jones stepped inside the church to see how the decoration was progressing. He immediately threw up both his hands and cried out in horror.

north wall of the church.

"Dear me!" he exclaimed, "that will never do! I wouldn't have Mr. Harder come in and see that for anything." "What seems to ail the matter of it?" asked Mr. Gubb, turning his bird-like head on one side and looking at the papered portion of the wall.

"Dear me! You have every fleur-de-lis upside down!" cried Reverend Orley

"Some would rather prefer to have them downside up, and some would prefer to rather have them upside down," said Mr. Gubb sadly.

"Point up always!" declared Reverend Mr. Jones. "Dear me, yes! Point up—aspiring heavenward—dear me, certainly! And after telling Mr. Harder that was why I chose the fleur-de-lis! And after using every argument to get the job for you instead of letting Mr. Harder give it to Mr. Jenks! Dear me, he will be ferocious!"

"I wouldn't want to care to have him be nothing like that," said Mr. Gubb. "I can take that paper off again. It's glued, and the glue has set, but I'll remove it off."

He did so. It was an extremely annoying and difficult job, and it was after eleven o'clock before he had the last inverted fleur-de-lis removed from the wall. When he reached his room in the Opera House Block, he was too tired to sleep. He went to bed and tossed uncomfortably. A, mosquito hummed around his head. He turned over and

tried forty positions. He could not sleep.

Finally he got out of bed and turned on the light and, in his pajamas, read over again that one of the twelve lessons dealing with clues. It is the lesson beginning "Clues: Clues are either external or internal. External clues have to deal with the physical aspects of the case, and internal clues have to deal with the moral aspects of the case. The detective must proceed in an orderly way and first examine the external clues."

Before he reached the end of this very important lesson, Mr. Gubb found himself nodding; and he tumbled into bed and slept. The next day was well advanced before Mr. Gubb awakened. The sun was pouring into his room, and already the day had warmed up with an almost suffocating heat. It was well on toward noon, and Mr. Gubb, with a sudden remembrance of the First M. E. Church of Riverbank, jumped out of bed and reached for his trousers. There were no trousers!

For a full minute Mr. Gubb stared blankly at the chair on which he had left not only his trousers but his coat, shirt and underwear. Everything was gone but the chair-even the shoes and socks he had left on the floor and the garters that had been attached to the socks. In something like a daze, Mr. Gubb went to his dresser and opened the drawers. Not a garment remained! He turned to the hook on the wall where he kept his Sunday garments, an excellent suit of clothes bearing the trade label of the Imperial Tailors-a suit, in fact, that he had seen recently in the window of Holheimer & Mittberg; with the sign "THIS STYLE, \$20," and that he had bought with twenty good silver dollars, Mr. Mittberg throwing in a pair of suspenders.

"I do declare!" exclaimed Mr. Gubb blankly. "Some criminal thief has been burgling into my room whilst I was slumbering in my sleep!"

THERE is nothing meaner than robbing a detective. Humorists, although they are able to make other people laugh, seldom even smile. I think you would have difficulty in imagining a surgeon

laying himself upon an operating table and, with a sure, steady hand, removing his own appendix. It may be stated as quite near the truth that after the surgeon had given himself ether he would be in a dazed condition and unable to operate on himself with anything like the success he might have in operating on another person. It is the same with detectives. It was so with Philo Gubb.

His first thought was "Ha! this will be easily simple for me to fathom out, because I am a deteckative." His second was "What should I ought to start to begin to do as a first commencement?" And he instantly found his mind in a dazed and helpless condition as the entire contents of the Twelve Correspondence Lessons pushed to the front of his mind at once. A robbed detective, suffering under his sense of loss and of insult, is no more in a condition to handle his own case than is a surgeon when in the throes of pain. The thing Philo Gubb thought he had better do first was to don pants. And he had no pants.

In the matter of clothing for legs, the thief seemed to have made a clean sweep. Not only had he taken the entire "This STYLE, \$20" suit and Mr. Gubb's everyday suit, but he had gone through the long line of disguises hanging on Mr. Gubb's wall and had taken everything not of a purely fancy dress or eccentric character. He had taken, for instance, the coat and trousers of "Disguise No. 34, Elderly Negro Preacher," and the entire disguise known in the Rising Sun Supply Bureau's catalogue as "No. 22, English Lord." In fact, he had taken every garment that might be worn by an American or foreigner without attracting undue attention. But he had left such things as "No. 27, Fiji Islander," which was nothing but a flimsy short petticoat of tough straw; "No. 18b, Korean Nobleman;" and "No. 21, Scotch Highlander." Indeed, on searching thoroughly, Mr. Gubb discovered that the thief had taken the kilts of No. 21 and all but the wooden clogs of No. 18b.

The whole affair was most wretched and humiliating, and it was complicated by the impatience of Mr. Harder and the Reverend Orley Jones, who individually and separately called Mr. Gubb on the 'phone while he was searching for something to wear, and who desired to know whether he meant to complete the decorating of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Riverbank next year or next century. Mr. Harder even wanted to know if he were drunk.

Unable to pin his mind to a search for clues, and not liking to arouse the anger of an influential man like Mr. Harder, Mr. Gubb made the one decision possible: he decided to get something to wear. With this in mind he took his check-book from his desk and then cast about for something good enough to wear as far as a clothing shop, for he felt a natural dislike for going upon the street barefoot and in his pajamas.

The unkind thief had not left him much choice, but Mr. Gubb made the

best of what had been left. On his feet he put the clogs of the Korean Nobleman; about his waist buttoned the straw kilt of the Fiji Islander; his arms and chest he hid inside the jacket of the Scotch Highlander.

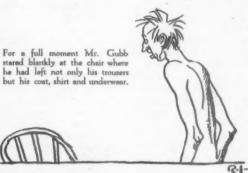
and that he might not go bareheaded, he tied around his head a red bandana handkerchief, which was one of the most useful articles of his entire collection of disguises, since it was used with the "Cowboy No. 3" costume, with "Elderly Negro Preacher No. 34," and—as Mr. Gubb was now wearing it—as a headdress with "No. 12, South Sea Pirate." Thus spottily garbed, Mr. Gubb left his room and clump-clumped down the corridor and down the stairs to the street. The moment he reached the sun-baked street, Officer Murphy, who had been standing on the opposite corner, saw him.

For a full minute, or possibly sixtyfour seconds, Officer Murphy stared at Philo Gubb in blank amazement. It was not the first time he had seen Detective Gubb in disguise. In fact, Mr. Gubb had so often hidden his identity under a disguise while in pursuit of criminals that persons who did not know him at all in his street clothes, easily recognized him when he was disguised, and said, pointing at him: "There goes Philo Gubb; somebody has been up to dirty work again!" Nor was it remarkable that, after his first astonishment at the mere sight of Mr. Gubb's sketchy attire, Officer Murphy should mutter, divil! he's got somethin' big on hand this time!" because he knew that Mr. Gubb, as was natural, saved his most complete disguises for his biggest cases. He might hide himself in the disguise of an Italian laborer to tackle the case of a mere chicken-thief, but a murder case logically demanded the disguise of a Scotch Highlander. If it was an ex-

tremely brutal murder, Mr. Gubb might even don the costume of the Fiji Islander. This was all quite logical. If he went after a boy who had stolen a peanut, he would not trouble with a 2.1- disguise; the greater the

crime, the greater the disguise.

As soon as he had recovered from his astonishment, Officer Murphy started hot-foot after Mr. Gubb, for there is always a rivalry between the police and the non-official detective. A case of sufficient seriousness to make Mr. Gubb wear not merely one of his most important disguises, but parts of all his most important disguises, must be a whale of a case, and if the police did not even know of such a case and Mr. Gubb solved it under their noses, the police of Riverbank would be still deeper in the disgrace into which Philo Gubb's many sensational successes had thrust them. Officer Murphy, following as closely as possible the best rules for shadowing a man, followed Detective Gubb at a fair distance.



AS Mr. Gubb proceeded down the street toward the shop of Holheimer & Mittberg (also known as the Star Clothiers, Agents for the Imperial Tailors' Ready-built Clothes), Officer Murphy blew his whistle and was soon accompanied by Officer Schultz, Officer Cooney Rink and Officer Grogan. With the utmost secrecy and skill, the four officers shadowed Philo Gubb. Ute Indians tracking a settler who was soon to be a victim of the tomahawk could not have proceeded more cautiously. From doorway to doorway they darted, peering out from their hiding places and proceeding by rapid, silent-footed rushes. Philo Gubb'did not suspect he was being shadowed.

One reason he had no suspicion was that some thirty or forty citizens of the town, seeing him in disguise and feeling sure that if they followed him they might see the famous detective in the very act of detecting, had immediately gathered directly in his rear, and were following him, expressing surprise and admiration as they gazed at his disguise. So thickly and closely did they cluster behind Mr. Gubb that he could not have seen the police officers through them with an X-ray machine.

"Undoubtedly," said one of the gentlemen following Philo Gubb, "this is one of the biggest cases he has ever un-

dertaken."

"When he leaves off his pants and wears that sort of hay petticoat," said his friend, "you can bet there's something doin'."

"The last time he wore that kind of coat, it was a murder," said the first

citizen.

"You know it!" cried his friend enthusiastically; "and it was a mighty bad murder, too, but nothin' to this one. When a feller with legs like his wears a hay petticoat, you can bet it's somethin' awful!"

So it was. Philo Gubb himself felt that it was. The mosquitoes alone made it something awful, and the addition of several lady shoppers to his entourage made him feel it was something even awfuller. A modest man like Philo Gubb can wear almost any costume while pursuing his duty as a detective and not feel

a qualm, but in his heart Mr. Gubb knew that a hay petticoat was no sort of garment in which to go about a simple affair like a little shopping. He no sooner reached the shop of the Star Clothiers than he jumped inside, and moving an umbrella jar, he shut the door in the faces of one and all. The same turn of his body brought him face to face with young Mr. Mittberg, the son of the elder Mittberg, and Mr. Gubb uttered these words:

"I want one of those twenty-dollar suits!"

Young Mr. Mittberg cast one frightened glance at Mr. Gubb's disguise. He gasped and tottered against the counter. His eyes expanded with fear, and his breath came and went rapidly.

"Mr. Gubb," he cried piteously, "as man to man, I beg you, give me a chance to explain. On my knees, if you say so, I beg it of you. If you say I should confess everything, I will do it. Yes, Mr. Gubb, anything you say, I will do, but please, please—"

"The kind of suit I want," said Mr. Gubb, "is the kind you had into the window, "This Style, \$20.' I haven't got no cash money onto me at the present moment of time, but if you could use a

bank check-"

Young Mr. Mittberg clasped his hands.

"I beg you, Mr. Gubb, say no more!" he cried. "A bank check I will give you willingly if you let me out of this business and let it go at that. I assure you, Mr. Gubb, it was accidental in every sense of the word, for, believe me, Mr. Gubb, it would kill my poor father to see me in jail. Yes! any amount of money I would rather pay! Forty, fifty, yes sixty dollars I would pay you for your trouble, and we wont say anything more about it; so please—"

He would not stop. The agitated words poured from his mouth in a stream, while his hands clasped and unclasped and grasped Mr. Gubb appealingly by the arm. Mr. Gubb, distressingly conscious of his long, bare shanks and his bare knees and of the many noses pressed eagerly against the glass of the Star Clothiers' windows and door-panes, repeated again and again: "The kind

of suit I want—the kind of suit I want—the kind of suit I want—" His voice was as eager as the voice of young Mr.

Mittberg.

Annoyed by the obstinacy of young Mr. Mittberg in refusing to pay attention, Mr. Gubb raised his voice and shouted, and voung Mr. Mittberg-convinced that Mr. Gubb was working some deeply Macchiavellian system of "sweating"-raised his voice even higher. From outside, it appeared to be a wild altercation of words. Officer Murphy, with a shrewd contraction of his blue eyes, eeled his way out of the crowd and sped up Main Street. With an analytic deduction worthy of Sherlock Holmes, he had deduced that young Mr. Mittberg was the criminal, and he was going to search young Mr. Mittberg's rooms.

Angrily Mr. Gubb shouted at the top

of his voice.

"All right then for good!" he shouted.
"If you wont sell me pants, I will go somewheres elsewhere!" And he turned and left the shop, slamming the door behind him. With a cry of agony, young Mr. Mittberg grasped himself by the hair and fairly flung himself upon the counter in an attitude of hopelessness.

He wept violently.

The crowd parted as Mr. Gubb emerged, falling back in two walls, much as the Red Sea parted to permit the passage of the Israelites; and the tall, flamingo-like form of the Correspondence School detective strode across the sidewalk and across the street in barelegged and angry haughtiness. He made straight for the door of the White Front (James Fogarty, Prop.), and as he approached the entrance, Patrick Fogarty, son of James Fogarty, who had been observing the crowd from the doorway, uttered a cry of dismay and fled into the store.

Mr. Gubb, followed by the crowd and shadowed by Officer Schultz, Officer Cooney Rink and Officer Grogan, put his foot on the doorsill. He threw one angry glance over his shoulder and entered, slamming the door.

"Fogarty!" he shouted. "Aint nobody

present in here?"

The White Front had a back door, and this back door was directly down the main (and only) aisle of the store, opposite the front door. As Mr. Gubb spoke, he saw Patrick Fogarty peer from the opening between two counters half-way down the store. On the face of the fine young Irish-American was a look of horror and panic. He was bent low, in the attitude of a sprinter, his head and shoulders silhouetted against the transparent glass of the back door.

"Fogarty! I want you to sell me the purchase of a coat, vest and pants!" cried

Mr. Gubb.

The effect of the words was instantaneous and surprising. As if they had loosened a bow-string against which Patrick Fogarty had been resting, that young man shot into the aisle and with tremendous flying leaps hurtled toward the rear door. He did not stop to open the door but threw himself full against it. With a crash of glass and wood, the door gave way and young Mr. Fogarty disappeared into the alley. Mr. Gubb stood amazed. For an instant he forgot even the hay petticoat. Officer Schultz, his nose pressed against the glass of the front door, was not, however, amazed. As he saw the form of young Mr. Fogarty disappear through the back door, he felt a moment of triumph. He had discovered the criminal Mr. Gubb was tracking. Hastily he pushed through the crowd and ran down Main Street. He was on his way to the rooms of young Mr. Fogarty to search them for evidences of crime.

Three times Mr. Gubb called aloud, announcing that he wished coat, pants and vest, but except for himself the White Front's interior was deserted. It is not too much to say he was beginning to be annoyed. It was extremely unpleasant for a man as greatly in need of trousers as he, to see every trousers-seller overcome by emotion or driven to flight by his approach. Thoughts of the waiting walls of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Riverbank and of the tremulous Reverend Orley Jones and of the hot-tempered Mr. Harder pressed upon him. Long before this he should have been at work on that job, and he could not understand why a simple request to be shown garments should create such fear and consternation. There were still two clothiers unfrightened, and Mr. Gubb turned toward the door. As he did so, he came face to face with a tall mirror, and he stopped short. Even he was surprised by the remarkable picture he made. He did not, as he gazed in the mirror, give himself credit for the tremendous impression he had made on all Riverbank as a crime sleuth. He stared at himself and shook his head in puzzlement.

"These clothes," he said, "aint precisely altogether correlated into each
other the way they should ought to be,
but I can't see no cause of reason for
everybody being frightenly scared at
them. Not but although," he added as
he studied his reflection more closely, "at
the first glancing look they might cause

the creation of surprise."

This was true, but it was also true that the image he saw in the mirror was hardly enough to cause such garmenthardened men as clothing dealers to beg piteously for mercy or flee in wild terror. As Mr. Gubb left the White Front, he watched his effect on the crowd that still awaited him, but he evidently aroused no such emotion in them. On the contrary, they stood back and eyed him with evident awe and respect. Instead of creating terror in them, the hay petticoat and the Korean clogs inspired silent admiration. Instead of running violently away, the crowd followed him respectfully as he walked down Main Street toward the Hub, a worthy clothing establishment kept by MacPherson & MacPherson.

There was no one in the store but Sandy MacPherson when Philo Gubb entered. The young man was near the middle of the store on top of a step-ladder, placing large, light, cylindrical hat-boxes on a shelf. Near him in front of the counter on which the step-ladder stood was a large, light crate filled with similar hat-boxes, and only some six or eight feet away was the open cellar trapdoor through which young Mr. MacPherson had a few minutes before shouldered the large light exerts.

dered the large, light crate.

As Mr. Gubb entered, young Mr. Mac-Pherson turned his head and looked. Then, like a sandy-haired gazelle, he leaped lightly from the top of the stepladder into the crate of hat-boxes and from the crate of hat-boxes through the cellar trap-door, and was gone! He was gone in less time than it took Mr. Gubb to say "Pants." He was gone utterly and absolutely, and when Mr. Gubb peered down the trap-door he saw nothing and heard nothing but the agitated slamming of the outside rear cellar door.

With remarkable acumen Officer Cooney Rink, who had been looking through the front door, turned and sped up the street. He was on his way to the rooms of Sandy MacPherson in search of clues to the crime of which—alas!—the police were still in ignorance. With a sigh Philo Gubb cast a covetous glance at the neat piles of male garments and

departed from the Hub.

He was profoundly conscious of the seriousness of his next move. The New York was the last remaining clothing store; the day was passing; Mr. Harder would be growing more and more angry; and the decorating of the First M. E. Church of Riverbank was slowly but surely slipping out of the hands of Mr. Gubb and into the hands of his rival, Mr. Jenks. Unless, Philo felt, he could induce the proprietor of the New York to sell him garments, all would be lost.

In approaching the New York, Mr. Gubb used the utmost circumspection. To use a hunter's parlance, he stalked it. He got to leeward of it, as one might say, and then pounced upon it.

The New York was not, in all respects. as up-to-date as the Star, the White Front or the Hub, for it was situated at an end of Main Street that had once been the business center but was so no longer. The building it occupied was ancient, with wooden shutters that could be closed (but never were) and with a wooden canopy extending over the sidewalk, supported by three dented iron pillars and one wooden post almost gnawed in two by equine cribbers. Having windows higher and less generous than its rivals, the New York brought its business to the attention of the public by the use of a respectable but little used form of advertising, the clothing dummy.

The four clothing dummies of the New York stood in a row on the sidewalk, two on either side of the door, close against the windows. Each was chained to the building by its single leg, which; near the ground, sprayed out into four wide-spreading feet. As Mr. Gubb, accompanied by some seventy-eight eager students of his detective methods, and shadowed by Officer Grogan, approached the business place of young Mr. Hodge, who owned the New York, the four clothing dummies stood idly, each flapping one trousers leg in the gentle breeze. They stood with a certain air of aloofness, as if seeking to appear unaware of their condition of chained captivity. Around the neck of one, as if it were a name-plate, was hung a placard:

so true to the period of 1850 that it would have deserved a place in a museum of Iowa antiquities.

On leaving the Hub, Mr. Gubb crossed the street, but before he had reached the opposite side he was sorry he had attempted it, for standing in a row were three stout, elderly ladies and one thin, middle-aged one. These were Mrs. Gipps, Mrs. Pilcher, Mrs. Figgis and Miss Benderby, the officers of the Riverbank Purity, Anti-gambling and Temperance League. Mr. Gubb immediately thought of his bare knees and his hay petticoat, which to some minds might



Mr. Gubb immediately thought of his bare knees and his hay petticoat.

"Marked down to \$9.98." His companions bore equally interesting inscriptions: "To-day Only, \$7.95," "A Bargain, \$12.50," and "This Style, \$20."

The building in front of which the four dummies stood was an excellent type of early Iowa mercantile architecture. The windows with small panes, the wooden shutters, the sidewalk canopy and the three wide steps that led up to the door were all typical. Even more so was the dashboard or false front that made the front of the building seem two stories high, while from side or rear anyone could see it was, in fact, no more than one story. Nothing but a hitching rail was needed to make the New York

have seemed immodest and thus to call for action of the purity part of the League; but the four ladies did not wait to reproach Mr. Gubb. No sooner did they get a good view of him than they uttered little cries of fright and went pattering up Main Street in four highly agitated conditions.

Mr. Gubb had crossed the street in order to give Mr. Hodge no suspicion of his coming, in case Mr. Hodge might be inclined to act like his fellow clothiers. When he was half a block from the New York, therefore, he stopped and turned and addressed the citizens who followed him:

"I'll be much obligingly thankful if

you wont come any more farther than this at the present moment of time," he said sternly. "I don't desire the need of

your any closer presence."

The crowd, deeply impressed, remained where it was-all, that is, but Officer Grogan. The moment Mr. Gubb turned his back, Officer Grogan glided hastily forward, dodged across the street and concealed himself as well as he could behind the dummy labeled "THIS STYLE, \$20." The dummy was not a perfect screen. Officer Grogan protruded from behind it at the top, bottom and both sides.

Mr. Gubb, having thus rendered his approach less evident, walked past the New York on the opposite side of the street, crossed at the next corner, turned and crept back toward the New York, using the most extreme caution and keeping close to the walls of the buildings. Unfortunately Mr. Hodge, seeing the bulky form of Officer Grogan darkening his window, stepped to his door. Seeing that the bulky form was that of a policeman, he instinctively looked in the other direction and saw Philo Gubb. Without even momentary hesitation Mr. Hodge leaped for the wooden canopy-post, climbed madly to the top of the canopy and as Mr. Gubb shouted at him, climbed up and over the false front of the façade and disappeared.

A moment later his head appeared above the false front. Mr. Gubb, a few vards down the street, saw him.

"Mr. Hodge!" cried Mr. Gubb, "please to descend down for a short period of time until I can speak six or a half dozen words of conversation."

The head of Mr. Hodge immediately disappeared from sight, and he was heard running across the tin roof toward the rear. Officer Grogan, convinced that he had now a clue to the crime Mr. Gubb was tracing, left the vicinity of "This STYLE, \$20" and sped rapidly up the street to search Mr. Hodge's rooms for the evidences of his crime.

Mr. Gubb seated himself on the steps of the New York and buried his face in his hands. He was in despair. A little more, and he would have wept. It was awful to be pantless and to have all

clothiers flee.

"Hush!" said all the component parts of the crowd to all the other component parts. "Hush! Don't disturb him; he's thinking. In a moment we will see what he will do next !"

What Detective Gubb did next was to stand up and look around for the easiest avenue of escape, for he saw Mr. Harder and Reverend Orley Jones press through the crowd and come toward him.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mr. Jones.
"What a peculiar costume!"

"One moment, please, Mr. Jones!" said Mr. Harder, who was a man of severe countenance and not to be trifled with. "Will you allow me to speak to Mr. Gubb? Will you allow me to say this is no time to speak of costumes?"

"Why, certainly! Dear me, certainly!" "I was about immediately to go up to the church as quick as I could get some pants to don onto me," said Mr. Gubb miserably. "I'm just as eagerly anxious to get that job of work done up as you

are, Mr. Harder."

"Mr. Gubb," said Mr. Harder, "I did not come here to remonstrate, but to congratulate. I congratulate you and thank you. The promptness with which you undertook the business in hand, taking the necessary steps-"

"I hadn't no pants to put onto myself," said Mr. Gubb; but Mr. Harder

interrupted him.

"Pants or no pants," he said firmly,

"justice and right will prevail."

"Undoubtedly sure," said Mr. Gubb a little doubtfully. "I wish to hope they will. I'm going to aim to do my best to discover who the criminal miscreants are. It is my duty as a deteckative."

Mr. Gubb undoubtedly referred to those who had entered his room and who had stolen the better portion of his wear-

ing apparel.

"To discover the miscreants might have been your duty," said Mr. Harder, "but now, I am glad to say, it will not be necessary. I and all of us appreciate what you have already done, but that part of your work is now needless. You can take off your disguise."

Mr. Gubb blushed.

"I wouldn't have nothing at all onto me if I did," he said.

"My meaning is that you need search

no longer," said Mr. Harder, drawing a paper from his pocket. "My meaning is that I have been fortunate enough to secure a list of the miscreants whose vile work was the cause of your having to don this disguise."

Mr. Gubb's mouth fell open in crass amazement. He took the paper and looked at the list of names it bore, and could not believe his eyes. Could these be the men who had stolen his trousers, waistcoats, coats, socks, shoes and more intimate articles of wear? The list read like a list of "those present" (males exclusively) at some important stag racket in Riverbank. It contained the names of many of the most prominent young business men of the town. Why should Townsend Hull, almost a millionaire in his own right, enter the room of a paperhanger-detective and steal a pair of blue cotton socks and a pair of well-worn "no metal touches the skin" garters? Why should Edward Deems, sole owner of a shoe-store, rob Philo Gubb of the boots that went with Cowboy Costume No.

3w? Why should the young Messrs. Mittberg, Fogarty, MacPherson and Hodge, with stores full of "THIS STYLE, \$20" in pristine condition, steal a suit of "THIS STYLE, \$20" that had been worn? Yet all these names and others were on the list. Mr. Gubb looked up from the paper dazed. His eyes, glancing up Main Street, rested for a moment on four men clustered together in the middle of the street at its far end. Although he could not recognize them at the distance. they were Mittberg, Fogarty, MacPherson and Hodge. They were watching a youth who was hurriedly proceeding toward Mr. Gubb. They had sent him. He was their emissary.

"Do you mean to inform me with the knowledge that all these here was into it?" asked Mr. Gubb.

"I do!" said Mr. Harder positively. "Every one of them. And so, Mr. Gubb," he added, "you need look for them no longer. Here is one hundred dollars. No, not a word! If you had had to hunt until you found them for yourself, we



Officer Gragan concealed himself behind the dummy.

would have given you two hundred, but we feel that one hundred is amply fair

and just. Good day!"

Mr. Gubb stood and stared at the money. He was too astonished for speech. He was still standing in frozen surprise when Tom Fogarty, younger brother of Pat, pulled him by the sleeve. Mr. Gubb looked down at him. Every line of the youth's face expressed secrecy and caution.

"Tsst!" he whispered. "Listen! Pat and the other fellows sent me. You're a good fellow, Gubb. You don't want to train against a lot of good fellows. See? Call it off, and they'll square you all right. How about it? Be a good

fellow!"

fellow!"

"I need every pants I ever had," said Philo Gubb.

"Sure! they'll fix that all right," said Tom Fogarty eagerly. "I'll tell them it's all right, shall I? I knew you was a good

He was off before Mr. Gubb could call him back. The crowd, unable to restrain its curiosity longer, crowded forward, but Officer Murphy pushed his way through. He held by the collar a man of disreputable appearance, and in his free hand he carried a large black cotton bag. He jerked his captive to where Mr. Gubb stood, and threw the bag at Mr. Gubb's feet.

"There!" he exclaimed. "You thought you was goin' to beat out the police again, Mister Gubb, but we got in ahead of ye this time. Whilst ye was snoopin' round, Murphy was on the job. Ye was so keen set on yer high-toned detective work, ye didn't see me scoot off for Mittberg's rooms. 'Twas there I caught the rascal, ready to take every dud in the place. Take the bag—I knowed the contints was yours by the crazy clothes there is in it."

Mr. Gubb opened the bag and looked in. In it were all his missing garments. With a sigh of relief he shouldered it, and without a word he walked with stately steps toward where his job awaited him at the First M. E. Church of Riverbank. As he departed, the crowd uttered a hearty cheer.

IT was half-past six that evening when Mr. Gubb entered his room in the Opera House Block. Over his shoulder he carried the bag containing everything the thief had stolen during the night. In his pocket he had the hundred dollars so mysteriously presented to him by Mr. Harder. As he opened the door, he stopped short in surprise. On his bed were four huge bundles showing, by their printed wrapping paper, that they had come from the Star, the Hub, the White Front and the New York. Their collected contents proved to be twelve suits of summer underwear, twenty-eight pairs of assorted socks, twelve linen handkerchiefs, three pairs of garters, seven shirts, two pairs of suspenders and four complete suits of clothes, "This Style, \$20." These were the bribes offered by Mittberg, Fogarty, MacPherson and Hodge.

Mr. Gubb sat on the edge of the bed and looked at them with interest and delight. He was engaged in this pleasant occupation when he remembered that he had left his room that morning without looking in his mail-box. He did so now. There was one letter, mailed, as the postmark showed, the night before. It bore the signature of Mr. Henry P. Harder,

and this is what it said:

My Dear Mr. Gubb:

It has come to the attention of the Riverbank Purity, Anti-gambling & Temperance League that some young -names unknown-have formed a club for the purpose of gambling by the game known as poker, contrary to the laws and ordinances provided, and that they have caused to be shipped to them numbers of bottles of whisky from out of the State, contrary to the laws and ordinances made and provided. I am therefore writing you at the request of Mrs. Gipps, Mrs. Pilcher, Mrs. Figgis and Miss Benderby-officers of the League-offering you a retainer of two hundred dollars provided you will immediately set about identifying the miscreants. We believe the whisky is shipped from Chicago, concealed in boxes of clothing.

Mr. Gubb took up one of the "This STYLE, \$20" suits and unbuttoned the hav petticoat.

"Into the deteckative business," he said thoughtfully, "disguises is one of the most usefulest kinds of thing."

NEXT MONTH: "The Parmiller Pounds," one of the most baffling cases ever solved by Mr. Philo Gubb!



A Place "In the Public Eye"

"YOU'VE got to be either religious or a radical to make a hit nowadays," lamented the rich man's son; so he proceeded to be a radical—of a very surprising sort.

By Arthur H. Gleason

E first flashed into the eye of his public when be put off his boyhood, with its three-dollar the heats, and began to blaze in New Mathewson, Travers Jerome and F. P. A. But as soon as the rosy son of plenty touched the haunts of Manhattan, he was talked about is to have

hood, with its three-dollar neckties, and began to blaze in New York. They watched him from the start—the newspapers and the restless readers. Each town has its own little group of folks whom it likes to see around. It is the modern substitute for the old-time local divinity, a hovering, favoring presence with a smack of salt mystery. Till the coming of this new charmer, our town had been well content with Georgie Cohan and Christie

succeeded in life. Young Chauncey (so soon to be known as "Our Chauncey") felt that from the start.

He wished to be in the eye of the nation and on the tongue of the average man what men like Morgan the Magnificent and Theodore the Terrific had

commanding the headlines to serve him.

His father's eye was deep-set and small and crafty, like an elephant's, and when you looked into it, the beam of it

struck fire against your gaze as if you had lifted the spark out of a rock by smiting it with flint. There was an instantaneous passage of power.

But the son's eye was mild and vague, a blurred gray-green, without hidden

fire or sudden kindling.

His father's nose was spoken of in Patagonia, and was the subject of tribal jest in islands of the Indian Ocean. That monstrous beak, cleaving its way through angry opposition, could have been carved in oak and clapped onto the bow of a Viking vessel for figure-head to plow the salt and ram the enemy. Chauncey's nose had a decent dignity of its own, a straight formation of feature which was sufficiently good but no more.

His father's forehead was lined with the seven sufferings of the thinker. The brow glistened with the invisible sweat of cerebration. The temples lifted proudly, with the chiseling of the fingers of the Little Folk who lend counsel to the worthy. But the head of the son was the usual thing for well-cut, closely cropped hair and untroubled forehead.

These mighty men of finance like his father pour their vitality into their work. Their brain-throbs extend to the far plains of South America, and their hooks are tight caught in dreamy and mystical Asia. They have small strength left for the nurture and discipline of children. All that is salient in the Big Chiefs passes over into the outline of their international schemes. They transmit their profile to the roadbed of transcontinental railroads, channeled through high hills and against the flank of glaciers.

If he had monkeyed with the old man's business, he would have stripped himself of glory. The American People do not approve of a fool. But he was too clever to tinker with the intricate machinery which his father had devised and set running. He lived on the profits from the product. It was his job, as he saw it, to create an Interesting Personality.

Once he went the length of Broadway buying up theater boxes. He started

with the general staff, that faithful band of six tried souls who were soundingboard and megaphone for his exploits. They entered Daly's and enjoyed twenty minutes of the last half of the first act. But then a tiresome wait ensued, because the curtain fell. So they sallied forth, and Chauncey bought the stage box at Wallack's. Here they passed an agree-able quarter hour. But "time flies," cried the host, and they trooped out to continue their patient trudge up Broadway. They were forced to taxi for several blocks before the sensational face of the Casino cheered them. Here a secondtier box was the only thing left-so ten minutes proved quite sufficient to catch the general tone of the musical comedy. Then it was out again and on again, soon to be refreshed in the dim colors of the Knickerbocker. The leading actress here they had seen often; it was only necessary to appear in the box, take seats, arise and pass out. The evening was now fast waning, and the fourth act of a religious drama was well under way when they overheard a fragment of its dialogue and agreed that if you liked that sort of thing, this was the sort of thing you liked. Finally, at the Savoy, they escaped the formalities of the play itself, and were able to give a curtaincall and extract a speech from the distinguished departing English actor.

On another occasion when Chauncey was forced to go from New York to Hoboken by tube, he hired a special train for the seven-minute trip under the river. But these little flutterings did not give him more than momentary satisfaction. He felt he had not yet given wings to

his spirit and taken a flight.

"You've got to be either religious or radical to make a hit nowadays," he said to his general staff, rather sadly. "There have been so many asses in on the spending game that they've smeared it all over."

It was just at this time that he met Lola La Fontaine. She had torn things up at her female college in her undergraduate days by advocating Woman Suffrage with a joyous exuberance which would have brought her into conflict with the college authorities but for the saving grace that her father had given

two hundred thousand dollars for a Hall of Prayer on the west campus. In her senior year, she had clamored for the immemorial right of girl students to elect their own professors and to recall those whose instruction was fatiguing or distasteful. When her petition, presented in a carefully folded manuscript inside a bomb-shaped structure of pasteboard, was denied, she hurled what she described as a "logically-aimed" rock through the stained-glass window of her father's chapel.

Up to date, her boldest constructive thought had been to call all the mothers of the nation to gather with their children and organize a march upon Washington. Once there they were to leave all children upon the steps of the White House as a symbol that every child was entitled to State support. This had failed as yet

because the mothers had not reached her clear pitch of exalted idealism where they could see a principle as greater than a child.

When this vital creature burst upon New York, after a triumphant graduation where she had shared the honors with a Hindu mystic and an ex-President whose lightest word reverberated through the known world, it was sensed by those who are prescient that Lola and Chauncey were destined to meet and share shy intimacies in radical thought.

It was the white-haired, saintly-faced leader of the militants, Mrs. Speedhearse, who brought them together-she who with a single meat-chopper had destroyed all existent paintings of the Barbizon school in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In her time she had served at least one term in every prison of the Atlantic seaboard. She was reverenced by the vounger element of the party as one who had been through fire to bring the white ballot of peace to her

Lola La Fontaine had often said that there was no character in history quite like her, none so ruthless and gentle, none who made the synthesis of lioness and dove in just that harmonious blend. Every act which the aged leader performed (and it was her simple but proud statement that she let no day pass without shedding blood or burning a building or hacking a masterpiece)-every act of hers was done impersonally and

> premise and itself became part of a syllogism. If she beat an Irish policeman to a pulp, it was done without anger for the man, but merely as an unimpassioned, chilly performance of duty. She saw this so clearly herself, with her vision ever on the long future.

> > that she was sometimes grieved by the irritability and even the insolence of her victims.

"Why should you resent what is done



her father's chapel.

lovingly?" she had been known to say to a bleeding and impertinent official. This was the woman who introduced

Chauncey to Lola.

"It is you younger ones who will carry on the great work," she said. "Ah, youth, youth," she mused, and then turned with one of her rare smiles to Chauncey. "I expect great things from this meeting," she said.

"You mean marriage?" queried Chauncey, who was both direct and daring, a combination that gave him rich charm in winning female favor.

"I mean race progress," she said emphatically. "You have already served,"

she added.

(Chauncey in a light-hearted moment during his student days at Elihu had burned the university library. His father, who owned the largest known collection of medieval hand-illuminated manuscripts, once described this episode of Chauncey's vigorous boyhood as the costliest single item ever charged off on his account against literature. It had required a special visit of the old King of Wall Street to the annoved president of Elihu to save Chauncey from a severe reprimand, which might have broken his spirit.)

"Now I leave you," said the venerable leader. "When I see you two again, you will have gone a long way on the road."

"Whither away?" asked Chauncey.

"No man yet knows the direction or the goal," answered the saint of the suf-fragists. "But we know, don't we?" she added, turning to Lola. Lola nodded vigorous assent to the gentle old warrior.

And so she passed out of the room, taking with her that large, calm personality which left a vacancy in its going

like the passing of summer.

"Isn't she big and splendid?" said

Lola enthusiastically.

But Chauncey was far busier in shaping his own inchoate personality into a famous effect than in paying tribute to a battle-scarred veteran who had held the front page of the leading dailies for half a century. So he came to the point at once.

"What's the matter with me?" he

"The usual answer to that in most

election districts is that you are all right. Is that what you're after?" asked Lola

sneeringly.

"No," replied Chauncey, who was too much in earnest to be stayed by sarcasm. "What I mean is this: I don't get the results out of life that an old woman like that gets. Why, the United Press sends a man around with her all the time. When she goes away to her Adirondack Hang-Out for a fortnight in the summer, the boys down in Park Row call it the Summer Camp. They have a squad of reporters up there in the woods to pull her plans for the coming year. They get her views on art. They claim now she's down on Gothic architecture. If her daughter isn't made Police Commissioner, I hear that the cathedral on Morningside is to be blown up. I understand the new administration has been given ten days to decide. Now, that's living. How does she do it? How does she hold the interest?"

"She's different," answered Lola. "That's the point. She's not a lukewarm person like you are. I could like you even if you were hot-foot against us."

"Could you now?" he asked, thoughtfully. "Do you really mean you'd have no objection to a stand-up campaign against you and your ideas?"

"I'd like it," replied Lola emphatically, "and so would she." She pointed in the direction of the departed leader.

"Well, you've given me an idea," said Chauncey.

"I have waited a lifetime for this," cried Lola La Fontaine ecstatically as she unfolded a letter for Chauncey to read. It was written in Mrs. Speedhearse's own hand. The paper was a faint pink like dawn not yet established, and around the letter and envelope ran a thin, dismal black border like a crapelined frame to a picture. In one corner was engraved her coat-of-arms, a lioness ready to spring-also her book-plate, a starry-eyed, scholarly woman surrounded by folios, a shaft of sunlight bathing her brow and the open tome in her hand; her post office address, the Castle of Tranquillity, Montserrat, N. Y.; her telephone number; and her cable address, "Hearse-o."



"Why the flossy paper?" asked Chauncey.

"Why the flossy paper?" asked

Chauncey.

"Surely that is simple enough," replied Lola, looking at his figure of male density a little wearily. "The pink is the dawn of hope to women the wide world over. The black border is the time of mourning till the work is accomplished."

"Shall I read it?" queried Chauncey

with his immaculate courtesy.

"Unless you want to sing it," retorted Lola impatiently.

It was an invitation for Lola and Chauncey to visit Mrs. Speedhearse for

a week-end.

"Think of it," said Lola, "—to see her priceless collection of manuscripts of the Cause, and walk over her noble property."

"I think I'll go," said Chauncey. "Of course you'll go," cried Lola.

So they went.

MRS. SPEEDHEARSE lived in her mansion of Montserrat, twenty miles up the Hudson. Here she mothered militancy, and kept in cable and telephone communication with the struggling sisterhoods in every city of the nation and globe. From this place, she sped her scouts and agents of destruction to slap governors, harry premiers and presidents, blow down shrines, carve up canvases. In the heart of its forty acres, the massive stone house looked out over the water, down to the great city and up the winding river bed.

"She's rich, isn't she?" commented Chauncey naïvely, as he strolled up the

flower-perfumed avenue.

"She's brave and good," rejoined Lola, "She scorns money."

"Does she scorn the idea of property?" asked Chauncey.

"Hates it," assented Lola. "She often says that she wishes she had been born poor. She wishes she didn't have a thing. She's all for the Cause."

Mrs. Speedhearse herself was on the veranda, giving final instructions to the

graduating class of Vasselley.

"Girls," she was saying in her low, deep voice which seemed to vibrate out of a cavern, "you are just beginning your life. Begin it right. The world is look-

ing to you for light. Give it a light that will sear its eyeballs open. Pass on the torch undimmed which your less fortunate but equally gallant sisters have used to burn down cathedrals, destroy estates, annoy politicians and impede govern-ment. For centuries they have spoken of man-made art as imperishable. We have proved that the 'immortal' works of their making are only stout enough for five minutes of flame. Gradually but surely we are destroying off the face of the earth all the masterpieces. Only a few are left. Soon we shall be able to start afresh. Then there will be no more talk of masterpieces. The very word masterpiece is offensive. There must be no masters. But on a virgin soil, sown with the ashes of our vengeance, we shall rear the work of Happy Women.

"In spite of our ever-lengthening victories, one last citadel remains to be stormed, one great collection still baffles our bomb and hatchet. It is the marble-domed museum of the magnate where the ancient, cherished manuscripts of monks and scribes rest unassailed—an eyesore to every womanly woman, a cup

of bitterness to my old age."

Her sweet-toned voice broke for a moment. The motherly face was touched with a spasm of pain. Then the iron control of a lifetime returned, and her melodious utterance swept on, lighting each eager young face of her listeners as she unfolded the vision of what they might be and do for humanity.

"As a graduate of Vasselley, and perhaps not the least of her daughters, I appeal to you to be worthy of your great traditions, your sacred Alma Mater. I ask you to wreck, burn, dynamite or otherwise lay waste the famous manuscript collection of old man Chauncey, the King of Wall Street."

She paused, and out of the fluttering graduates there came the sigh of an audience profoundly moved, and then, slowly gathering, but gaining in fullness, a shrill, intense volume of applause. They broke up into clamorous groups, laughing, sobbing, assenting.

"She has led us to the mountain top,"

cried one.

"We must not hesitate to jump off," murmured another.

LOLA and Chauncey had arrived in high time to hear Mrs. Speedhearse's powerful climax. Chauncey was delighted. He smiled happily at the girls

and signaled for attention.

"I know the old man well," he said. "In fact, he is my father. Twice, as a youngster, I tried to smash that library and each time was foiled-once, I grieve to say, by a woman, my nurse-a woman unkindled by the finer fires of to-day. I tried a firecracker—one of the larger sort known as a giant - or cannoncracker. The damage was slight. But what I have failed in doing, you will carry through. No single act could mean so much to your college and the Cause."

His splendid enthusiasm carried him into the hearts of the graduates. They were ripe for action. Mrs. Speedhearse

dismissed the delegation.

"It's good to see you two," she said warmly, as she led Lola and Chauncey

inside the luxurious hall.

The aged leader, a little spent by the great effort with the girl graduates, brought the two young people to a

charming sun-room. "I have much to show you," she continued, "-invaluable papers and pictures which the future will cherish among its dearest possessions. At my death I shall leave them to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. They can fill the space that was once given over to the Barbizon School."

"She destroyed it, you know," Lola whispered to Chauncey, admiringly. "That was one of her noblest days."

"I know, I know," retorted Chauncey impatiently. "That's as well known as the Pass of Thermopylæ."

Mrs. Speedhearse rang twice, and two maids answered the call. She handed out

"Bring me the Certificates of Honor," she suggested in winning tones.

The maids bowed silently and together, and hastened out. Mrs. Speedhearse was famous for her discipline. They returned laden with rolls of parchment, went out and again returned, again

"Enough," she said. "You may go." She opened one of the rolls, and showed it to the young people.

"Here is the original Certificate of

Honor issued to Muriel Murphy, at the time she laid down on the trolley tracks at Twenty-third Street and Broadway and held up the traffic for one hour."

Lola and Chauncey bent low over the

sacred parchment. It read:

Dear Sister

The world may not know it. But we know it. You have done a brave, fine thing. You have hastened the day when woman shall be free. All loyal women everywhere to-day bless your name. Your act is as simple and as far-reaching as all big, splendid deeds.

GERALDINE SPEEDHEARSE,

President of the World's Congress of Conquering Feminists.

"I am keeping it for her," said Mrs. Speedhearse. "She says it is far too precious to be trotted around with her to prisons and club meetings. So much for the Certificates. We'll see them, later. They each one of them commemorate some stirring thing in our propaganda."

"And here is my Museum," she said, turning into a large room lighted from overhead, and full of glass cases.

"Here, for instance, is a section of coat-tail torn from the afternoon suit of the late Prime Minister of England. Millicent Mahoney was the brave girl who pulled the Premier to his knees and ripped this sample from his broadcloth. Think how precious these things will seem to the generation after us."

"Immense," murmured Chauncey.

"I have never seen anything quite so moving," breathed Lola.

"And here is a little gem worthy of a monograph. It is a one-dollar watch stolen from the pocket of the Governor of Texas when, in answer to a delegation of women demanding to be appointed to office, he replied: 'Wait a little; there's time enough.' "

Beautiful," said Lola. "Beautiful." "And now for the picture gallery," said Mrs. Speedhearse, sweeping the way into a charming gallery with shaded electrics raining a flood of soft-tinted light on a couple of score of portraits.

"Yonder," said she, "is a face for you. That is the girl who soldered her finger to the electric bell at the front door of Senator Beverage. They couldn't separ-



"Ah, you have a keen eye," said Mrs. Speedhearse. "That picture is known as the Martyrdom of the Miles Faucet Sisters."
772

ate her from the ringing unless they chopped off her finger. This they were unwilling to do. So they shut off the current and removed the bell. She wore it for several weeks, till the solder crumbled. And here is perhaps the noblest portrait in the gallery. It is the staunch little woman who sprinkled cayenne pepper over the Maine Legislature in session."

"The face of an angel," said Lola in

a low, tremulous voice.

"Here's a strange picture," shouted Chauncey of a sudden, with the cry of a discoverer. He pointed to a large canvas, which depicted the interior of a stateroom on an ocean liner. Two girls, reading novels, were in the foreground. One of them was sipping tea as she read, the other munching at a ship's biscuit.

"Ah, you have a keen eye," said Mrs. Speedhearse. "That picture is known as the Martyrdom of the Militant Faucet Sisters. One of them, during a trip across, had secreted herself in the wheelhouse and grounded a piece of steel bar close to the compass so as to deflect it, hoping to alter the vessel's course. And her sister had inserted bolts in the steering gear. In another hour they would have had the boat helpless, and with good luck they could have run her into the path of icebergs."

"A most splendid idea," interrupted

Lola.

"But, alas, they were discovered, and the captain locked them in their stateroom and placed a stewardess on guard at the door."

"Barbarous," muttered Lola. "Do you wonder we women rebel?"

"You're too patient by half," responded Chauncey.

"You can't understand, sir," said Mrs. Speedhearse, deeply moved in spite of herself, "what such imprisonment means to a woman. The narrow quarters, through hour after hour of the day, while other folks are at shuffleboard on the deck; the endless tea and biscuit of an English ship—all that is terrible, almost unendurable.

"And now I have shown you my treasures. It is best that we turn in for the

night."

THAT night all was quiet through the forty acres, and in the spacious house. Only a smart wind outside tossed the laden boughs and whipped the windows with leaves. Hour after hour passed by, welcomed by the old hall-clock which boomed without warning and then let its tone shiver away into silence down the corridors.

Suddenly a shrill cry rang out, the anxious shout of Lola La Fontaine.

"Fire—I smell fire and smoke," she shrieked. "The library is afire! The library is afire!"

Heavy-eyed, she rushed to the head of the hall-stairs and switched on the bulbs of all the floors and rooms. Disheveled, amazed, Mrs. Speedhearse tottered toward her, clad in a pink nightrobe.

"The picture gallery," sobbed the great leader, "—the pictures are burning." That holy calm of hers was broken. She, who had endured the sight of the destruction of a nation's treasures without bashing an eyelash, was row agitated. Servants stampeded for the open, banging doors and tripping over priceless rugs.

"Millicent Mahoney? Can we save her?" begged Lola.

"Too late—we must save ourselves," cried the leader. "Look. The Museum is in flames. Everything has gone. Out! Out!"

Together they made a dash and sped down the avenue, never pausing fill they were a hundred yards from the doomed mansion and treasure-house. Here they met Chauncey in evening clothes, smiling, courteous, a cigarette at work on his lips.

"A pleasant evening," he said, cheerly, "—cool but pleasant."

ily, "—cool but pleasant.
"You poor stiff," said Lola. "Look
vonder—the house is burning down."

"My precious papers destroyed," wailed Mrs. Speedhearse; "mementoes of the Sisterhood in flames, the pictures of the martyrs gone."

"Ah, it is a neat job," said Chauncey modestly.

"What do you mean?" breathed Mrs. Speedhearse.

"Oh, I did it, you know," said Chauncey.

A new story of Shoestring Charley, circus man and very regular fellow.



The Ace in the Hole

By Courtney Ryley Cooper

Author of "Opals for Luck" etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. M. BRINKERHOFF

"WO for Mankato—on circus mileage," grunted Shoestring Charley of the World Famous Circus, as he passed the porter his grips and dived up the steps and into the smoking compartment. Hastily he grabbed a sanitary cup from the rack and then eyed Slats Warren slantwise as he gulped water. A moment more and he was clawing for his makin's as he slumped into the long leather seat beside

his cadaverous general agent, and gasped for breath. "Shorty might ha' wired us in time to keep us from doing a sprint for this train," he growled. "But then—"

"Don't guess he found out about it soon enough," came the answer of Slats as he peered out the window. "Huh! The natives are sorta journeying forth to the op'ry. Looks like a turnaway."

For a second Shoestring Charley for-

got the many troubles that suddenly had piled on him, to follow the glances of Slats Warren. Far across the great lot the first lights were beginning to show on the circus grounds where fluttered the flags of the World Famous. Before the ballyhoo stand of the "Ten in One" the townspeople were massed thick, to hear of the wonders of the Aztec Twins, just-t-t-t-t inside, everay-bodi-e-e-e-e! Across the way, the merry-go-round squawked on in its squealing, howling never-changing lack of melody, just as it had squawked since opening day, with the "natives" hanging on, three abreast. The arc above the ticket wagon flared and spluttered-against the approaching dusk-and Shoestring saw that both windows were open-and doing business.

"Yeh," he said slowly, "turnaway. We'll need it." He lighted the cigarette as the wheels of the train began to click into full speed. He puffed nervously. Finally: "What kind of dirty stuff has

Bigfinger pulled?"

In answer, Slats Warren fished into an inside pocket and pulled a telegram from the mass of reports and letters. Slowly he unfolded it and handed it to Shoestring. The latter waved a hand.

"Read it to me," he ordered; "I'm

thinking."

His gray-brown eyes were sparkling and snapping as he stared ahead. His lips were pursed a bit, and his rather thin shoulders were hunched forward. The cigarette which hung from his lips showed a steady glow. Shoestring Charley was peevish-and fighting. came the voice of Slats Warren:

"J. B. Warren-General Agent "The World Famous Shows-"Norfolk-Nebraska.

"Got back here to find Great Amalgamated's brigade here and covering all paper in sight, and them and my men mixing it every five minutes. daubs and country billing all covered. Banners and lithographs pulled. Opposition bills out saying we're not coming. Bigfinger Williams here in person. Says to blazes with all agreements about fair opposition. Tried to stop them and they fought. Everybody but the Wop has black eye. Shall we cover 'em back? Please answer this telegram as I am waiting to know what to do.

"SHORTY ENNIS."

Shoestring snorted. "Can you beat that last sentence?" he asked. "And I suppose he's up there with his whole brigade sitting around nursing a discolored lamp and wondering what to do. By golly!"-and there was a world of disgust in the tone-"I'd like to see the inside of a billposter's mind just once!"

"You'd only see two things there," came the surly answer of Slats Warren. "One of 'em'd be the question of whether they had to work the Fourth of Julyand the other'd be the same thing about Labor Day. Huh! They don't make billposters any more. Say-y-y-y, I can remember when I was managing the One Car for the Sells and Downs and-'

Shoestring scratched his fifth match and sheltered it against the breeze from the window. He cut in:

"What'd you wire back?"

"Burnt the tar out of him. Asked him what he was running—a nursery? Told him we were coming and to cover everything in sight-at night. I guess they'll be rough-housing it again by the time we get there. Well,"-and Slats too began the rolling of a cigarette,-"there's a consolation. The Wop'll handle a few of 'em."

Shoestring had been staring ahead. But at the mention of the Wop he grunted a bit-and he too fished into an inside pocket.

"That guy's name's Carletti, aint it?"
"Yeh. Why?"

Shoestring was running through the

bunch of letters in his pocket.

"Got a squall from his mother this morning. She lives up there at Mankato. Wants to know if she can get her kid's salary for ten weeks ahead. In hard luck or somethin'. Same old story of the poor, poor widow and the heavy mortgage. Wonder they couldn't pull something new-aint it?"

"Think it's on the square though, this time," came from Warren. "The Wop aint had a cent all season. Sending it all home. Old man got killed in a scrap and didn't leave nothing except the earth. And she wont let the kid fight in the ring—and how's he gointa pull off any debts on fourteen per? Huh? You can't beat these women when they get this soft and gentle stuff into their blood. That Wop's no billposter. He's a prize-fighter. You know that. You seen him fight Knockout Rogers at Denver last year—he's the only man that ever put K. O. to sleep. I'll tell the world he's a fighter," Slats enthused. "If they'd let him go, he'd be a darb—one awful scrappin' kid. But Mother butted in—and he's billpostin'."

"Well,"—and Shoestring's eyes went into the future, — "he'll have all the chance he wants to keep in training with this Bigfinger bunch. Let's go in and eat. They aint nothing we can do to stop Bigfinger Williams, setting out here

talking about it. Come on."

In the diner, the conversation lagged—then ceased. Both Shoestring Charley and his general agent were thinking—with something to think about. In the world of the "white tops," as the circus universe is known, there are two words which bring up all the bitterness, all the ancient fighting spirit, all the anger and spleen which can gather in a man's heart. And those two words are "dirty opposition."

Time was when all opposition was "dirty." Then the billposters of every show fought on sight, should their respective "op'rys" be playing within twenty miles of each other on anything like conflicting dates. Then the great, flaring banners and streamers and posters could only portray the wonders of the Bovalopus or the Blood Sweating Behemoth of Holy Writ in its wild or native state, until some billposter from an opposing troupe wandered along and slathered pictures of Mazie Marbles, queen of the air, on top of it. Nothing was respected in the old days,-sand found its way into car journals; wheels disappeared from wagons overnight; billposters hurried forth-to be found at the roadside, unconscious and with a head full of welts,-and tradition is a hard thing to down. For in spite of the "agreements," in spite of the desire to be "gentlemen" and "honorable showmen," the old fighting spirit comes back when

two circuses meet on the same grounds; the efforts of years on the part of men who have attempted to "uplift the profession" dwindle and dwindle—until "dirty opposition" is only a step away.

And so it was that the dwindling process had been gone through by one Bigfinger Williams, of the Great Amalgamated Circus, due to play in Mankato, Monday, July 30, day and date with the World Famous. So it was also that right now, hunched over the table of the diner, Shoestring Charley and Slats Warren frowned and struggled to devise means of fighting fire with fire, of effacing dirty opposition with opposition of even a dirtier type. Circuses are somewhat like battling elks. They fight to the end—and to the death.

Long they were silent. Shoestring rolled a cigarette, looked longingly at the steward—then threw it away at the negative nod of the latter's head. He pulled a pencil from his pocket and figured—only to scratch the meaningless numerals out almost as soon as he made them. At last he brought a scrawled letter from his pocket, hunched his shoulders nearer together than ever, and read it.

"Does sound on the square, at that,"

he murmured at last.

Slats Warren, his mouth full of celery, looked up.
"What?" he asked, fulsomely.

"This here equation—as Harry Tammen would say—from the Wop's mother. She's up against it for twelve hundred. Maybe I'll drop out and see her—after I've finished Bigfinger Williams." He squinted and reached for his pencil again. "How long's that brigade been in Mankato?"

"Ten days," came the answer of the general agent. "Had the town burnt up; banners on the span wires, every window full of lithographs and every barn in town wrapped up with stuff. Then Bigfinger sailed in and looked it over. Guess that's why he went dirty. There wasn't a chance for him any other way."

"Ten days—" Shoestring Charley was figuring. "Eight men on the brigade. Two hundred and a half a day, counting the paper—we've spent twenty-five hundred already."

"The town aint worth five thousand dollars on the day if they'd strike gold," Warren gritted. "For two cents I'd cancel and play Sioux City cold and make a Sunday run from there into Minneapolis and—"

Shoestring's brows went close together. He clenched a fist.

"Ouit-vou mean?"

"We'd make money at it. Sioux City's worth seven thousand on a good day—"

"Ever see a cow turn an airset?" Shoestring Charley's sharp brown eyes were glittering. "That's the same chance that we've got for quitting. I don't care if we don't get a nickel. There aint no man on God's green earth—Bigfinger Williams, Shifty Bill Thomas, or the ghost of the whole Sells family—that's going to make me quit! Bigfinger Williams

may play me day and date, and he may make me jar loose with some money—but I'm betting ten to one that the next time it even looks like day and date, he'll burn up the road getting out of the way of me. That's how hard I'm going to fight. Get me?"

Slats Warren grinned.

"You're the guy that's spending the money," was his sole answer as he dived into the steak before him.

AND so the conversation went—ever on the same subject—while the train ground steadily on to the north. There came the finger-bowls, and Shoestring hurried for the smoking compartment, once more to drag at his inevitable cigarettes and say unkind things to Slats Warren about the ethics of the Great Amalgamated. A sleepy-eyed porter stuck his head in the door, to announce that berths were made up and waiting. But Shoestring Charley of the World Famous shook his head.

"Nix on the sleep, Tom," he announced shortly. "We'll stick it out—

Three o'clock, and two men squinted against the darkness as they stumbled along the cinders from the station at Mankato. An arc light, and they

stopped to stare at each other. Before them on the sidewalk lay a pile of tattered, becolored rags, once glorious in red and blue and white, once screaming announcements of the approach of the Great Amalgamated Shows. There they lay, torn and useless, while fresh and glaring, there glowed on the side of the building the newly tacked banners of the World Famous Circus. Slats picked up a bit of banner and threaded it through his fingers.

"Guess that telegram did the work," he said. "The gang's on the job."



From a distance there came the sound of a long, screeching rip-then silence—then the ripping noise again. The two generals of the World Famous wheeled, then hurried forward. A turn of the corner, and they stopped in the shadow. High upon a ladder which led to the upper stories of a vacant building from the also vacant lot adjacent, a chunky, shadowy figure reached out, gave a great wrench at the resisting cloth before him, tore it from its fastenings and sent it floating to the ground. He seized the sides of his ladder, and with great hunches, moved it into a dangerous angle along the building that he might seize the next strip of banner which awaited. The long fingers of Slats Warren tightened around Shoestring Charley's arm.

"It's Carletti, the Wop," he whispered.

"He's-Carletti! Look out!"

The muscles of the two men tensed. From out of the shadows a second figure had shot, to plunge through the weeds toward the ladder, his body low, his arms outstretched. A second shout from Warren, and he and Shoestring leaped forward. The man on the ladder turnedhe reached for a projecting window-sill to steady himself-but too late. The crouching figure had reached the ladder the outstretched arms had seized it and strained at it. The long streak of rungs wavered a second and then came plunging downward, the Wop sprawling through the air before it.

"Grenfell — Amalgamated!" Warren was biting out his words as he leaped far to one side. "Head him off!"

The shadowy figure turned. It ran toward Warren, wheeled and started in the other direction, only again to turn from the rushing form of Shoestring Charley, who was swinging a scrap of railroad iron above his head. Once more the shadowy figure dodged and dodged again. Suddenly he stopped-he whirled and ducked. But it was useless. Out of the weeds, his face bleeding, his clothes torn and ragged, had come the Wop, dazed and wavering, just in time to block the escape of the man who had attempted to kill him. He plunged forward-his chunky shoulders knotted beneath his coat. He jabbed-at the air

at first-then his fists found flesh. The arms of Grenfell swung wildly: he shouted something in a high, shrieking voice-then he crumpled to the ground as the Wop's fist crashed under his chin. An instant the Wop hesitated; then he leaped upon the form of the fallen one. The chunky arm drew back for another blow. But the barking voice of Shoe-string Charley interrupted,

"Off of him there-he's down! Wait till he gets up-then lace him to a foam.

Wait till-"

"Shoestring-behind you!"

There was a break in the high-pitched voice of Warren as he shouted the warning. From every side, it seemed, men were rushing out of the shadows, men of the Great Amalgamated, and the sound of a heavy, cursing voice told of the proximity of Bigfinger Williams. Shoestring whirled and swung his bar of railroad iron. A crushing, sodden sound, and a man went down. Shoestring leaped back as the bulky form of Bigfinger swung toward him, and gripped tight at his weapon. But a chunky form intervened, to plow past him, to shoot his right and left into the stomach of the owner of the Great Amalgamated, to send him reeling away and then to plunge on toward the approaching gang of men behind. Then suddenly a scurrying—a cessation of blows. But it was too late. A shout—the red flaring streak of a revolver-shot as its bullet flew high-an order, sharp and incisive!

"Hands up—everybody!
The "law"—hated tormentor of circusdom - had intervened. A moment later the bell of a patrol clanged down the street, while twelve circusmen, glaring and resentful, awaited a ride to the "bastile." At the booking desk Shoestring pulled forth a wallet simultaneously with Bigfinger.

"What's the bond?" they asked.

The desk sergeant continued writing

names on the blotter.

"Aint none," he answered lackadaisically. "Judge's issued orders. Tired of having you fellows fighting all over town. You'll board with us till morning."

Shoestring Charley gasped and clawed for his makin's. But they lay in a pile



Vhat's the bond?" they asked. The desk sergeant continued writing names on the blotter. "Aint none," he answered adaiscally. "Judge's issued orders. Tired of having you fellows fighting all over town. You'll board with us till morning."

with the rest of his possessions before the desk sergeant. He moved forward and leaned over the desk, gently sneaking them into his sleeve as he pleaded. Then, he wandered down the steel stairs with Slats and the bloody-faced Wop—to a clean, white tier of cells.

"Slats," he said gently as he sat uncomfortably on the side of his steel bunk and rolled a cigarette from his recovered makin's, "I had my mind made up to spend five thousand if necessary to whip

that big stiff. Now-"

"Yeah-h-h.". Slats Warren stared gloomily at the shadow-fresco of steel bars beneath the lone electric light.

"Now"—and the old bark was in Shoestring Charley's voice—"I'm going to spend twenty-five! And what's more, I'm going to win, some way, somehow! And what's more—on top of that—I'm going to turn in and sleep on this steel broiler until that judge makes up his mind to talk to us."

THE making up of the judicial mind came early. For the fights had been many since the announcement of "day and date" and the judge had been waiting. Nine o'clock brought twelve worn men before the long brown judge's-bench in police court. And nine o'clock brought a frown to the face of the judge as he

looked at the men before him.

"It appears to me"-and his voice was dry and rasping-"that there is some disagreement between you gentlemen regarding your playing of this city on the same date. It appears to me also that the easiest way for you to settle this argument is for only one of you to play here. In lieu of a fine, I give this decision: Settle the matter any way you choose: gamble for the privilege-just as long as you do it out of the jurisdiction of this court-draw straws-settle it like gentlemen or arrive at a decision by any means you like, but settle it somehow that only one of you play in this town. Otherwise-"

"But looky here, Judge—" Bigfinger Williams was leaning over the desk and waving a hand before the executive. The voice of that person went more rasping

than ever.

"Otherwise," cut in the judge, "a fine

of three hundred dollars for each of you-"

"But—" This time the voice was that of Shoestring Charley, but it also was

cut off by the judge.

"And a sentence of two hundred days under ordinance 316, civil code of Mankato, applying to assault and battery with intent to kill; also under section 224, covering willful and malicious destruction of property. Now—take your choice."

And so it was that two men—one big and hulky—one small and sharp-eyed, glared at each other in the "cooling room" of the court, a few minutes later, while Slats Warren hesitated in the background. Shoestring Charley dragged his makin's from his pocket and spun a cigarette.

"Well?" he asked as he fished for a match. "What do you want to do—shake dice, flip pennies, throw horseshoes or

fight? It's up to you."

"Fight," came in the heavy voice of Bigfinger, "since you suggest it. Me

against you?"

"Fair guy, aren't you?" Shoestring's eyes sparkled with sarcasm. "We'll pass that. But"—and the sparkle in those eyes grew brighter than ever—"if you're fond of fighting, take on the Wop, or send somebody else to do it—in the regulation twenty-four feet, three-minute rounds, time-keepers, referee—and to a finish. And the winner takes all—Mankato and all the rest."

"And what's the rest?"

"Whatever you want to bet," came coolly from Shoestring Charley, "even money at matched weights. Two gets you one if you'll put your weight against his science. Well?"

The last question was sharp. It was taunting. It was derisive. Then suddenly the eyes of Shoestring dulled a bit at the realization of the breadth of his challenge. Shoestring had pitted the Wop against the world at his weight. And the world holds many a fighter. Only for a moment did Bigfinger hesitate. Then he drew his wallet from his pocket.

"Five thousand—on the side," he announced tersely. "When do we pull it?"
"Any time you say." The eyes of

Shoestring were sparkling again now, and his cheeks were burning with the excitement of the odds which he had given.

Bigfinger grinned.

"I'll want to take a little trip first—a day or two," he answered, and the import of the sentence brought a gasp from Slats Warren in the rear. "You left the Wop open to anybody at his weight. And that goes! There's an old ring out at Grierson, where they pull off a fight now and then. It's outside the jurisdiction. I'll be ready Saturday night. Is it set?"

"Agreeable." And Shoestring smiled grimly. "Winner takes all. We'll inform his judgeship that we've reached an amicable agreement. Come on, Slats—"

Slats Warren, somewhat dough-faced and wondering, followed slowly into the court-room, and listened dully to the words spoken there. He stumbled silently as Shoestring led the way to the hotel, following the release, and registered for the two of them. He gawked a bit in the elevator, and stood uneasily by the window, his hands deep in his pockets. Shoestring glanced toward him, and a twinkle of humor came into his eyes.

"Too bad she's dead, Slats," he ven-

tured.

"Huh?" Slats turned. "Who's dead?"
"Why—aint your wife dead—or something? Thought maybe she was, from that coffin face of yours. What's eating on you?"

Slats spread his arms.

"We're cleaned, that's all," he answered dully. "You know what Bigfinger's going to do, don't you? Gosh, didn't you know that him and the Arizona Kid are buddies? And the Kid's wearing the belt in the lightweight division. The only way we can save the Wop from a knockout is to fill him full of electricity or dope or—"

Shoestring looked out the window. "That's exactly what I'm going to do—

dope him."

"Dope him?" Slats Warren whirled

at that. "What with?"

"My own brand," came from Shoestring. "But there's another little matter to be settled first—whether the Wop will fight or not. Go out and stir him up and bring him up here. I want to chew the

fat with him for a couple of minutes."

Just what went on in that room during the process of "chewing the fat" came only in bits to Slats Warren, waiting outside the door. At first the voices were calm, then higher pitched—and Shoestring's was pleading and promising. More than once Slats could hear the showman's sole argument.

"But she can't find it out! Anyway, she wont know until after it's all over! You're in condition, aren't you? You can whip this guy if you try, Carletti—and what's more, you'll save the show! Man

alive, aint that anything?"

And evidently it was not—at least, it was not of sufficient weight to tip the scales against the Wop's promise. And with every denial the heart of Slats Warren, listening in the hallway, went lower and lower. Then suddenly the scraping of a chair, as it was shoved back rapidly, and the barking voice of Shoestring Charley:

"Looky here, Wop! You aint got any excuse! You're afraid—that's all—yellow, dirty yellow—all the way through!

You're yellow, yellow-"

"I aint yellow, Meesta Charley!"

"You're yellow, I tell you! I'm sick of you—there's a streak down your back as broad as the Lincoln highway—"

"Please, Meesta Charley-"

"Then, if you aint yellow—fight! Hear me, fight! I'll fix it so that mother of yours wont butt in. Now do you fight or not?"

A long silence—then Slats Warren could stand it no longer. He opened the door—and as he walked into the room,

the Wop gave his decision.

"I show you, Meesta Charley, whether I'm yellow! I show you!" The brown little figure stood tense and muscle-knotted. His black eyes were glittering. His sinewy hands were tearing and twisting at his cap. "I show you!"

"Then you'll fight, eh, like a good

boy?".

"I fight!" The Wop was ready to battle the world now, "I fight anybody! I wheep dees champeen till he look like a mush. I—"

"Chop it off, kid," came the cool voice of Shoestring Charley. "Save that rough stuff until you get in the ring. Now beat

it, Wop, and take a workout to get rid of those three or four extra pounds. And you've only got three days to heal up that face. Here's ten dollars. Don't spend it all in one place."

And as he handed the bill to the effusive Wop, Shoestring glanced curiously at Slats Warren. "Well," he asked as the Wop went out the door, "aint you got rid of that funeral face yet?

Slats looked out the window. "You've sure got confidence," he murmured.

"Confidence?" Shoestring barked in reply. "I aint got confidence; I've just got gall, that's all. What'd you think I was going to do, let Bigfinger back me down? Not yet, for Shoestring Charley! If you're framed to lose-you might as well lose big as little! That's my hunch! Gimme a cigarette. Let's eat."

SHOESTRING'S optimistic view of life did not fade. He was whistling as he rolled his after-dinner cigarette. He continued through the day, jovial to an extent seldom seen by Slats Warren, unusually jovial for a man who stood to lose all. Once Slats spoke somewhat apologetically of selecting a town to substitute for Mankato in case of mis-Shoestring Charley merely fortune. squinted an eye, rolled a cigarette and rose.

"Be back after while," he announced, without even noticing Warren's suggestion. He went and returned-mysteriously. And when he once more was in his room, he pulled forth a pencil for much figuring. He was silent now; once in a while he looked at Slats and smiled.

But he said nothing.

Nor was there any event of the following days which could cause Shoestring to say much of anything important. The Wop invaded his room to rave of his perfection of condition—the result of hard work, clean living and the everpresent preparation for the fulfillment of a dream that would not die, even in the face of his promise. Shoestring heard him amiably, handed him ten dollars, then returned to the consideration of his cigarette. Bigfinger Williams departed and returned, as Warren has prophesied, with the Arizona Kid. Shoestring looked him over, remarked that he was a wellbuilt boy, and then buttonholed Bigfinger for an hour with annoving reports of tremendous business everywhere for the World Famous, and the more annoying rumors of ten days of straight rain for the Great Amalgamated. Following which he ordered a planked sirloin with mushrooms for dinner and played callshot pool enthusiastically. But just the same, Slats Warren noticed that Shoestring Charley rolled even more cigarettes than ever, and that his eyes dulled now and then. Shoestring Charley's mind was working-and working hardbeneath the surface.

And there it remained until darkness had come Saturday night and Slats Warren had answered the knock at the door to find the Wop and his seconds without. The voice of Shoestring snapped orders. The Wop and his followers turned down the hall toward the outdoors and the waiting taxicabs. Shoestring watched him-then half-nervously flipped a cigarette out the window.

Know that little anteroom just this way from the entrance—the one with the window that opens on the ring?" he asked sharply.

"Yes sir."

"I'll be in there if anything happens. But don't look for me unless you have to. Understand? If I'm going to lose this thing - I want to lose in peace. Need any money?"

"Money?". Slats opened his eyes. Shoestring smiled inscrutably.

"Thought you might want to bet."

"No tha-a-a-nks!" came the answer of the general agent. "And you'll notice that the Wop aint bettin' any either.

"Good reason. He aint got any, except them sawbucks. And what's morehe don't get any unless he wins-then he gets a century note. Better be going out, hadn't you? I'm going to stick around a few minutes. I got some letters to write."

"Letters?" the general agent gasped. "Letters? Of all the-"

And then for lack of a sufficient vocabulary, he slammed the door.

T was the usual "athletic club" that Slats entered a half hour later; the square ring with its glaring arcs above;

the big rambling room with its rows of wooden seats, running tier upon tier to the ceiling, its smoke, its buzz, its yelping pop-boys, its noise of whisky-heightened conversation. For somehow the word had traveled, somehow Mankato's sporting element had learned all the details, with the result that it had jammed through the admissionless gate, to fill every seat of the long wooden rows; to overflow into the folding seats on the floor and jam the rickety old wooden building to the ring itself. Slats fought his way to the timekeeper's bench, then fought his way into a seat. From the loft-like balcony above there came the sound of arguing seconds, of squabbling bottle-men and rubbers. Across the ring, hulky and heavy, leered Bigfinger Williams and his brigade. Of all the great shambly "club" only one spot bore a lack of life-the little anteroom with the window.

A wait. Noise. Shouts. The squawking of the pop-boys as they stepped on foot after foot. The yelping of the cushion venders, self-appointed concessionaires, exulting in the heaven of a hundred-per-cent profit and no commissions. Then suddenly a tightening of the muscles of Slats Warren's face. A hush. Two men had crawled through the ropes -one white and sleek and pantherlike in his muscles and his tread; the otherstocky and chunky and brown of skin. Above the Wop's left eye ran a long, iagged mark of red-his souvenir of dirty opposition-a mark which gave him a peculiarly surly, dogged appearance, as he sought his corner and stood, his arms over the ropes, looking at his opponent. As for the Arizona Kid, he gripped the ropes in his corner, and stamping and gliding his shoes in the powdered rosin, laughed and joked with his followers as though there never had existed such a person as the Fighting Wop. His sinewy back was toward Carletti; and as he waved and swerved in his stamping, the smooth muscles of his bared body played and moved with the graceful strength of some sleek animal of the wild. Suddenly he turned, and laughed as he looked toward Bigfinger. Then he crossed the ring to Carletti's corner.

"Let's see those dukes of yours, kid," he ordered as he stretched forth his own taped hands. "Y'might have a horseshoe up your sleeve, you know. Never can tell. Wound kinda tight, aint you?" He was looking carefully at the smoothly bound tape which covered the Wop's knuckles. "Guess they'll do. Y' wont get to use 'em much!" He turned, laughing, and went to his corner. The Wop stuck out his hands for his gloves, absently disregarded the fifty-seven varieties of advice that came from his seconds, and scowled beneath his scarred forehead.

"Beega bluff!" he grunted. "Beega fourflush!"

A second's wait. The announcement. The timekeeper's mallet raised, then descended. Slowly and carefully, the men came from their corners, the Kid loose-armed and smiling, the Wop crouched, and tense and scowling. Closer they came, and the Arizona Kid's muscles flexed into position. He tried a lead. It was blocked. The Wop came on. Again the lean left of the Kid reached forth, once more to be blocked as the Wop, his eyes squinted, his body hunched and doubled, bored on toward him. A smashing blow as the Kid caught an opening, swung his snapping right, then leaped into the clear. But it had been like a blow against steel; the Wop came on. A rush-close in against the Kid was the Wop now, his short jabs reaching home, pounding, smashing with the force of a steam hammer. The Kid paled a bit, gasped and clinched. His seconds were waving their arms through the ropes.

"Stay away from that close stuff!"
Their voices were yelping and raucous above the roar of the watchers. "Don't let him get in—stretch him out—stretch him out!"

"Stretch him out yourself, Wop!" came the jeering answer from the opposite corner. "Get to his wind! That a boy! That a boy!"

And Warren, who had never lifted a glove in his life, found himself shouting orders with the rest.

The break, and they stalled about the ring, the Arizona Kid breathing back the strength which a lucky punch had

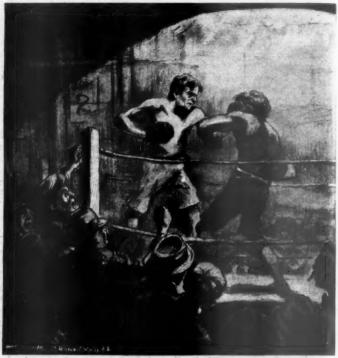
cost him, the Wopcrouched and dogging and awaiting his chance for another rush. A quick sally on the part of the Arizona Kid, a series of lacing blows which rocked the head of the Wop from side to side -then the stall-. ing again. Suddenly the Wop seemed to plunge through the air, to send his right under the guard of his enemy, and then with his left drive blow after blow against the gloved barrier before him. But as he struck, so did the Kid strike, over - reaching a bit as the Wop closed in, struggling against the savage attack of the little Italian

as the short armed jabs pounded time after time against him. A clinch, a break—the gong; and the men were in their corners, once more to disregard the fervent advice of their seconds; to short against the water and the towels and to plan their fight their own particular way. The timekeeper leaned toward Warren.

"Gointa be a real scrap, aint it?" he asked. But the general agent did not answer. He was staring toward the anteroom—the anteroom still untenanted. In his heart Warren knew that something besides letters had kept Shoestring Charley away. But what it was, Warren could neither guess nor fathom.

Slats straightened. The gong.

A moment of indefinite action—and then once more the Wop bore in. And this time he did not stop. Slugging and punching, his blows coming straight and hard from his chunky shoulders, he



A woman's voice had sounded high and thrilling above the rearing of the high-tiered seats across his blood-blinded eyes. Again came the message, "Tony! "Mudder!" gasped the Wop—

drove the Kid around the ring. Again and again the Wop ran into the straight, jabbing left of the champion as he made his rushes. But he went on. The champion's jabbing left finally caught that scar across the Wop's forchead to lay it open and red and gaping. The Wop leaped back. Quickly a glove went up to wipe the blood from his eyes. Then he bored in again.

The blows of the champion pattered upon his swelling lips, upon that jagged scar of his forehead, but still he went on; still his gloves sought flesh and rammed their way into the wind of the enemy. The clanging of the gong again—the corners where the water splashed and the powdered alum found its biting way into the wounds to stanch the flow of blood.

Again a rush by the Wop-and his eyes opened slightly with surprise. For



—a woman's voice, strident; commanding. The Wop ducked and rubbed his arms swiftly Mio Carlssimo! Heet heem! Heet heem! Keel heem! Tony!"
Then came the electricity again.

the Kid was not there. The Kid had learned his lesson. He had "mixed it" for two rounds, playing the only game which Carletti knew—with results far from favorable. Now he had changed—from now on, it was to be his game—a game of hit and run.

Here and there he dodged about the ring, his whole mind intent upon one purpose, the planting of blow after blow upon that sore, jagged wound, which ran above the Wop's eyes. Enough blows, enough abrasions, and those eyes would close. After that—the Kid smiled.

"Kill him, Wop!" It was a screeching voice high from the crowded seats. Slats Warren swung disgustedly in his chair.

"Kill him?" he asked. "Wait till he catches him, wont you? He aint no fighter—he's a road racer!"

But the Kid, up there in the ring, only smiled at the taunts and the jeers. He

was playing his own game now.

Another round -another and another - while the Kid, fresh again and breathing deep, jabbed in his blows and danced about the ring, smiling and confident. For the Wop, by that strange psychology of the ring which no one can explain, had changed his tactics to meet those of the Arizona Kid. He too was boxing-fatal effort for the Wop. And those about the ring saw and understood. Warren's hands clenched.

"Bore in!" he shouted. "Bore in! Get into him! Don't box him—fight! Fight—fight—" Then

suddenly his words ceased, for there in the tiny aperture of the anteroom showed the face of Shoestring Charley. But strangest of all—he did not seem to be watching the fight—instead he was turned and talking and seeming to give orders to some one invisible. The end of the round came and another began, and Shoestring looked once toward the ring.

The Kid's tactics were doing their work. The jagged wound poured forth its blood now at the first tap, in spite of the alum, in spite of all, leaving the brown, chunky figure of the Wop groping, half blinded. His rushes had ceased altogether. Once his arms dropped and the swift-traveling glove of the Kid planted itself heavy and galling in his stomach. He reeled, then straightened—but the Kid had reached the point he desired now. From the right and from the left his blows came. And stodgily

the Wop plodded about the ring; his legs crossed; he sank to his knees; then he rose and swung wildly. He rolled upon the ropes—then suddenly straightened as if charged with electricity.

A woman's voice had sounded high and thrilling above the roaring of the high-tiered seats—a woman's voice, strident, commanding. For just a second, rocked by a blow from the Kid, the Wop turned his head to see the dumpy form of a little woman as she came rushing down the aisle, her hands high, her eyes wide with excitement, Shoestring Charley behind her, urging her on. The Wop ducked and rubbed his arms swiftly across his blood-blinded eyes. Again came the message.

"Tony! Mio Carissimo! Heet heem! Heet heem! Keel heem! Tony!"

"Mudder!" gasped the Wop—then came the electricity again. The wavering of the legs was gone now. Almost before the Kid could realize it, the Wophad rushed under his cover and was slamming him everywhere. Boxing was gone now. The Kid sought to sidestep. It was useless. The Wop was upon him, slashing blows upon his face, his body, striking with uncanny skill and surety.

Again the voice of the woman, cheering Tony on. Rush after rush-he had taken the Kid off his feet and was holding him there. His head tight between his shoulders,-his teeth gritted hard and his hands clenched harder,-the Wop bored in time and again. He cornered the enemy. He smashed him and slashed him. A half-arm swing sent Tony reeling halfway across the ring, but he came back again. A straight jab of an angered left caught him full in the mouth; he spat and came on, his blows crashing harder than ever. For again had come the voice of the woman, stringing forth excited Italian sentences, and Tony was hearing every word. The timekeeper stared at his watch. The mallet dropped.

Into his corner went the Wop—while the alum came forth, and the lemon and orange. The tapping of the gong, and he was halfway to the Kid's corner. A great swing—the Kid veered, and with animal fierceness the Wop sent a stinging right to his opponent's jaw. For just a second the Kid stumbled. But it was enough. High in the air went Carletti, to send both jabbing fists pelting into the face of the champion. Science was gone now—science was impossible. The Arizona Kid no longer was fighting a man—it was a beast who faced him. A wide-ranging, crushing swing; a crackling as it met the flesh, and the Kid wobbled to the ropes. A second he hung there — to straighten again—then to double beneath the Wop's fiendish uppercut. The arm of the referee swung pendulum like:

"One-and two-and three-"

The Kid was up again, only to meet once more the trip-hammer blows of the Fighting Wop. His head sagged, his half-closed eyes whitened, his knees bowed—and then, as the Wop's right hooked viciously into his stomach, he crumpled to the floor for the count, while Slats Warren roared and shouted until his throat went raw—and Shoestring Charley rolled another cigarette.

THEY met on the sidewalk where Shoestring Charley was tucking a heavy roll of yellow bills into a pocket with one hand and tucking a dumpy little Italian woman into a taxi with the other. Slats watched the machine depart. Then he stuck forth a hand.

"Slip 'er!" he said joyously. "Some spectacular entrance with that mother!" "Mother?" Shoestring's face went blank. "Oh, you're wrong, kid! That wasn't his mother. Tried her out two

days ago and she wouldn't stand hitched. Was gointa call the cops, but I squared 'em. Then I beat it out and cornered a dumpy little dame that looked like her and talked like her. These Wops are all alike. Y'see, Slats, I figured on that cut on the forehead. A guy can't see much, ten feet away, when his eyes are full o' blood. And when he hears himself being called pet names, he knows it's Mamma. Get me, kid?"

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Slats Warren whistled. "The ace in the hole!"

"Yep!" Shoestring was rolling himself another cigarette. "And say, kid, whatta you think o' payin' off that mortgage? The Wop's worth it—aint he?"

Another Shoestring Charley story in the next-the March-issue.

HE struggles of a "smart set' to dominate a community of the old order make the background of this novel of smallcity life, told in the genial, inimitable Nicholson way.

Old Uncle Tim Farley is a wealthy commercial pioneer, whose business in-tegrity has built for him a loyal following. Opposed to him is Billy Copeland, spendthrift and member of the "smart set." who has bought out Farley's interest in the wholesale drug business Farley and his father built. He still owes Farley twenty-five thousand dollars. And be-tween them stands Nan Farley, the adopted daughter of Tim Farley, who goes with Copeland's crowd and encourages his attentions, both against Farley's commands.

Nan Farley is a beauty and a wit. She was rescued by her foster father from a was rescued by her better the floating shanty in an Ohio River flood when she was ten. Farley is an invalid and cross, and to Nan, the

valid and cross, and to courting of a man like Copeland, who is rated as one of the "fast" young men of the city, holds piquancy.

The story opens with a smart luncheon given at the Country Club by the ostentatious Mrs. Kinney, whom Farley has asked Nan to avoid. Billy Copeland is present, and much champagne is drunk. Dis-gusted at her disloyalty, Nan runs away to the river. There she notices a

young man, practicing fly-casting. His hook catches in a tree near her. In disentangling it, the would-be angler introduces himself as Jerry Amidon, who, as a boy, was her neighbor in the Ohio River town and as poor as she. His fresh though not impudent speech amuses

Nan, and she allows him to talk to her.
"I broke from the home plate when I was sixteen and arrived in a freight-car," he tells her. "Began by sweeping out in the well-known house of Copeland-Farley, and now I swing a sample-case down the lower Wabash."
In their talk Nan learns that John

Eaton, a bachelor and a man of ability and standing, is much interested in Amidon. Later, when crossing the Club grounds, Nan meets Eaton and tells him young Amidon and she were childhood neighbors. Eaton's interest in her is quickened by her frankness.

That night Farley berates Nan for meeting Copeland and tells her if she

meeting Copeland, and tells her if she doesn't stop seeing him there will be no

money for her.

Nan vows that she has no intention of marrying Copeland and cajoles Farley into a better humor. She keeps to her promise not to see Copeland again or go about with the "smart set." Farley is pleased and takes her to visit Copeland's former wife, Fanny, whom it is rumored Copeland made divorce him so that he might marry Nan. Fanny is a pretty, able woman, who is making a success of a dairy farm. She is gracious to Nan and stirs in the girl a sense of unworthiness.

HE smoother course of Nan's life is changed by her brother Rob, who begs a thousand dollars to help him out of a cutting scrape. Nan gives it from her savings without asking Farley's advice. The old man learns of it and is furious. Only the intervention of Eaton, who calls with Jerry Amidon, and who knows of Nan's brother's arrest, pacifies Farley.

Eaton becomes more and more interested in Nan and Amidon. He speaks a quiet word here and there, and Nan finds herself invited to social

Résumé

of the Previous

Chapters of

"The Proof of

The Pudding"

functions given by the "old families." And Jerry is promoted to an office position in the Copeland-Farley house, where he learns that the business is falling off because of Copeland's "spreeing."

Copeland has to borrow to pay Farley what he owes him and is fac-ing ruin, while Fanny Copeland, the cast-off wife, inherits a fortune.

After some time keeping her promise Nan

comes across a copy of a will Farley has made. She is angered at finding her foster father has left her only one hundred thousand dollars instead of the large amount she had expected. She immediately accepts an invitation to meet Mrs. Kinney and later to take dinner at her house, where she meets Copeland.

The dinner is boisterous and there is much drinking. Copeland, however, stays sober to impress upon Nan that he can refuse liquor if he wishes. He begs her to marry him. Nan, hurt at what she considers the cruel treatment of Farley, gives her consent, and Copeland decides privately to have the marriage per-formed next day. He is close to ruin. A bank holds a hundred thousand dollars of his paper due in five days, and he be-lieves that Farley, with all his bluster, will do something handsome for Nan when he finds she is really married. So he refuses a mysterious proposition of Eaton, who says he comes as a friend, to buy the maturing paper.

The PROOF OF

CHAPTER XV

FATE AND BILLY COPELAND

HEN Nan left Copeland the night of the Kinney party, she promised to call him the next day. As telephoning from home was hazardous, she made an excuse for going down town and 'phoned from a department store. Copeland was not in, and she repeated her call several times without reaching him. Copeland, if she had known it, was in the directors' room at the Western National, discussing his affairs with the president.

She had a superstitious awe of petty frustrations of her plans and hopes. The Celt in her was alert for signs and miraculous interventions. Perhaps the angels of light or darkness were bent upon interfering; the idea kindled her imagination.

In the street she ran into Fanny Copeland.

"You dear child, I'm so glad to see you! I was just wondering whether I had time to run up to the house."

To meet Billy's former wife just when she was trying to perfect plans for marrying him, was altogether dismaying.

"Papa hasn't been quite so well," Nan was saying in answer to Fanny's questions. "But it's only a slight cold."

She experienced once more a feeling of self-consciousness, of unreality, in meeting Fanny face to face. And within a day or two she might be another Mrs. Copeland! And yet Billy had once loved this woman, undeniably; and Fanny had loved him—she might, for all Nan knew, still love him. Nan envied the little woman her equanimity, her poise, her good cheer. If she were only like that, instead of the wobbly weather-vane she knew herself to be! Why hadn't she a firm grip on life instead of a succession of fatuous catch-as-catch-can clutches at nothing?

Nan wished, as she had wished a thousand times, that troublesome problems would not rise up to vex her.....



The Farley chauffeur had run his machine to the sidewalk to pick her up.

"I hope your father will be better soon," said Fanny. "Give him my love, wont you?"

Nan's eyes followed her as the car got under way.

When she reached home she met a special delivery messenger at the door. Her heart jumped; it was from Billy, who had risked sending her a message that might very easily have fallen under her foster-father's eye. She thrust it into her pocket unopened and ran up-

"Well, you're back again, are you?" Farley said harshly.

"Yes, Papa; I had to go down town on an errand."

"It's always been a mystery to me what women find to trot down town for, so much."

"Pins!" she replied lightly. "We always need little things. I met Mrs. Copeland—looking for pins, too; so you see I'm not the only one."

"You saw her, did you?" he asked eagerly.

"Yes; I met her as I was coming out of Sterling's. She was just starting home."

"I'd been hoping she'd stop in, but she's a busy woman."

"She has a lot to do, of course. If you'd like to see her I'll telephone her to come in for luncheon to-morrow."

He appeared to be pondering this, and

THE PUDDING

A Fine American Novel

By Meredith Nicholson

Author of "The House of a Thousand Candles," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY C. H. TAFFS

his hands opened and shut several times before he answered.

"No; never mind. She's busy and it really doesn't matter." He stared vacantly at the ceiling for a moment. "I guess that's all fixed now," he added musingly, apparently forgetting her.

She was anxious to be off to her room to read Billy's note; but she lingered, curious as to what further he might have to say about Fanny.

"You like that woman, don't you, Nan? You and she get on—you haven't found any traces of ill-feeling toward you?"

His small gray eyes were bent upon her with an odd expression of mingled hostility and kindness.

"Of course I like her, Papa; and I believe she likes me. There's no reason why she shouldn't like me!"

"No reason!" He caught her up contemptuously.

She knew that he was thinking of Billy. His face twitched as a wave of anger seized him.

"That man is a scoundrel!" he blurted.
"If he hadn't been he'd never have treated that woman as he did!"

"It doesn't seem to worry her much!" she flashed back at him. "I don't know a happier woman anywhere!"

She realized instantly that the remark was unfortunate. He pointed a shaking finger at her.

"That woman," he said, pronouncing the words with fierce deliberation, "ought to get down on her knees every night and thank God that she's rid of him! That great bully, that worthless loafer! But I'll show him a few things! If that blackguard thinks he can put anything over on me, he'll find that I'm smarter than he thinks I am! You remember that!"

The nurse turned from the window where she had been standing quietly.

"You must be quiet, Mr. Farley; the doctor said you weren't to excite your-self."

"I'm not excited," he flared. "Doctors and lawyers make a nice mess of this world. They don't any of 'em know anything!"

He gave himself an impatient twitch, and several documents slipped from under his pillow. He clutched them nervously and thrust them back,

Nan was jubilant for a moment in the knowledge that she knew what those documents contained — devices for humiliating her after he was gone. If only he knew how little she cared! He thought of nothing but his money and means of keeping it from her.

"Go away; I want to think," he said gruffly.

NAN was grateful for this dismissal, and a moment later had softly closed her door and was eagerly reading Copeland's message. It covered three lettersheets, and the daring of its contents caused her heart to beat wildly.

What he proposed was immediate marriage. There was to be a military wedding that night at a church in the next block. Nan, he assumed, would attend. At the end of the ceremony she had merely to pass out of the church, and his machine would be waiting round the corner. She could pack a suit-case ostensibly filled with articles for the cleaner's and he would have a messenger call for it during the afternoon. They would run up to Lafayette, where he had a married cousin who would have a mininster ready to marry them-then take a train for Chicago and return the next day and have it out with Farley



Copeland's message covered three letter-sheets, and the daring of its contents caused her heart to beat wildly.

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faith in the idea that once they were married they might safely rely on Farley's forgiveness. Farley's passionate outbreaks at the mere mention of Copeland pretty effectually disposed of that hope. But that was not so important, for in spite of Farley's unfavorable opinion of Copeland's business capacity and Billy's own complaint of hard times, she had an idea that Copeland was well off, if not rich. To outward appearances, the drug business was as flourishing now as in the days when both Copeland and Farley were still active in its affairs. It was the way of business men to "talk poor" even when they were most prosperous; this had, at least, always been Farley's way.

The gaunt figure in the room across the hall rose wraithlike before her, giving her pause. Yes, the Farleys had been kind to her; they had caught her away from the world's rough hand and done all it was in their power to do to make a decent, self-respecting woman of her. Her advantages had been equal to those enjoyed by most of the girls she knew. Many people — the town's "old stock," Farley's substantial neighbors - would see nothing dashing or amusing in her flight with Copeland. They would call her the basest ingrate; she could fancy them saying that blood will tell, that after all she was a nobody, a girl without background or antecedents, whom the Farleys had picked up, out of the kindness of their simple hearts, and that she had taken the first chance to slap them in the face.....

Then she remembered the will that had given her the key to Farley's intentions. Possibly the new will, which Thurston had brought to the house that day, cut her expectations to an even lower figure....

It pleased her to think that she was studying the matter dispassionately, arguing with herself both for and against Billy's plan. It was more honest to marry Copeland now and be done with it than to wait and marry him after Farley's death. This she found a particularly satisfying argument in favor of marrying Billy at once. Her histrionic sense responded to the suggestion of an

Nan had never shared Copeland's elopement; it would be a great lark, besides bringing her deliverance from the iron hand of Farley. Yes; she would do it! Her pulses tingled as she visualized herself as the chief figure in an event that would stir the town. It was now four o'clock. Copeland had written that at five a messenger would call for her suit-case, and all she had to do was to step into his car when she came out of the church.

She was downstairs listening for the bell when the messenger rang. As she handed him the suit-case, she felt herself already launched upon a great adventure.

WHILE she was at the door the afternoon paper arrived, and she carried it up to Farley and read him the headlines...

She had her dinner with him in his room. There was a pathos in his lean frame, his deep-furrowed brow, in the yellow, gnarled hands. She was not as happy over her plans as she had expected to be. She kept saying to herself that it wasn't quite fair - not an honest return for all the kindnesses of her foster-parents, to run away and leave this broken old man. As she thought of it, every unkind word he had said to her had been merited; she had lied to him, disobeyed him, tricked him.

"What's the matter with your appetite, Nan?" he asked suddenly. "Seems to me you've looked a little peaked lately. Maybe you don't get enough exercise now that we've got the machine."

"Oh, I'm perfectly well," she replied

"Well, you've been cooped up here all summer. You'd better take a trip this winter. We'll keep a look-out for somebody that's goin' South and get 'em to take you along."

"Oh, that isn't necessary, Papa. I never felt better in my life.'

"Isn't this the night for that Parish girl's wedding?"

"Yes; I thought I'd go," she answered carelessly. "It's at the Congregational church, and I can go alone."

"All right; you be sure to go. You never saw an army wedding? I guess 'most everybody will be there."



Eaton, who had heard her several times before, was surprised at her success; she had taken pains; and how often Eaton, in comic piece and added. "The Oli



thinking of Nan, had wished she would take pains! There was no ignoring the demand for more, and she gave another Swimmin' Hole" for good measure.

When he reminded her that it was time to dress, she answered indifferently that she didn't care to go to the reception, and that the gown she had on would be perfectly suitable.

"I'll just watch the show from a back seat in the church, Papa; you can see a wedding better from the rear, anyhow."

"Well, don't hurry back on my account."

She had been afraid that he would raise some objection to her going without an escort; but he made no comment.

She ran her eyes over the things in her room-photographs of some of the girls she had known at boarding-school, trifles for the toilet-table that had been given her on birthdays and holidays. It was a big, comfortable room, the largest bedroom in the house, with a window-seat that had been built specially for her when she came home from school. She glanced over the trinkets that littered the mantel, and took from its leathern case a medal she had won in school for excellence in recitations. On the wall hung a photograph of herself as Rosalind, a part she had played in a presentatation of "As You Like It."....

She must leave some explanation of her absence—so she sat down at her desk

and wrote:

Dear Papa:

Please don't be hard on me, but I've run away to marry Mr. Copeland. We are going to Lafayette to his cousin's and shall be married at her house tonight. I hope you wont be hard on me; I shall explain everything to you when I see you, and I think you will understand. We shall be back very soon and I will let you know where I shall be.

She hesitated a moment and then closed with "Your loving daughter, Nan." She thrust this into an envelope, addressed it in a bold hand to Timothy Farley and placed it under a small silver box on the mantel.

She stood a moment at the door, then closed it softly and went in to say good night to Farley. He took the hand on which she had half-drawn her glove and held it while his eyes took her in slowly.

"I didn't know whether you'd wear a hat to an evening wedding. I never know about those things," "Oh, this is such a foolish little thing, Papa; you'd hardly call it a hat," she laughed.

"Well, don't let one of those army officers pick you up and carry you off. I want to hold on to you a little longer."

As she bent to kiss him tears sprang to her eyes. Face to face with it, there was nothing heroic, nothing romantic, in abandoning the kindest friend she was ever likely to know, and in a fashion so shamelessly abrupt and cruel.

"Good-night, Papa!" she cried bravely and tripped downstairs, humming to

keep up her courage.

SHE absently took her latchkey from a bowl on the hall table and did not remember until she had thrust it into her glove as she went down the steps that she would have no use for it. It was the finest of autumn nights and many were walking to the church; there was a flutter of white raiment, and a festal gayety marked the street. She waited for those immediately in sight to pass before leaving the yard and then walked toward the church.

She eluded an officer resplendent in military dress who started toward her, and stole into the nearest seat. The subdued happiness that seemed to thrill the atmosphere, the organist's preludings, the air of expectancy, intensified her sense of detachment and remoteness.

The notes of the "Lohengrin" march roused her from her reverie and she craned her neck for a first sight of the

attendants and the bride.

Just before the benediction she left quietly, and was soon in the side street where Billy was to leave his car. She had expected Billy to be in readiness, but he had evidently waited for the end of the ceremony. It was inconsiderate of him to keep her waiting. She loitered, ill at ease, while the organ trumpeted joyfully and the street began to fill.

Then she saw the familiar white roadster, with Billy in the chauffeur's seat, just turning into the side street where several policemen were already directing the movement of the parked carriages and motors toward the church entrance. Ignoring their signals, he drove his car forward. A policeman jumped on the step and bawled to him not to interfere with the traffic. Billy's overcoat was flung open and the light of the lamp at the intersecting streets smote upon his shirt bosom. It was absurd for him to have put on evening clothes and a silk hat when he had a long drive before him. Nan watched with mounting anger the disturbance he was creating. The crowd that had assembled in the hope of catching a glimpse of the bride now found Copeland and his altercation with the police much more diverting.

"Billy Copeland's drunk again," some one behind Nan remarked contemptu-

ously.

The white car suddenly spurted forward and crashed into a motor that was advancing in line toward the corner, causing a stampede among the waiting vehicles.

While the police were trying to separate the two cars, Nan caught sight of Eaton. He seemed to be trying to persuade the policemen of Copeland's good intentions. Billy's voice was perfectly audible to the spectators as he demanded to be let alone.

"They haven't got any right to block this street; it's against the law to shut

up a street that way!"

The policemen dragged him from the seat, and the chauffeur from one of the waiting cars jumped in and backed the machine out of the way. Nan' waited uncertainly to see what disposition the police were making of Billy; but having lifted the blockade, they had left him to his own devices. He had been drinking; that was the only imaginable explanation of his conduct, and her newly established confidence in him was gone. However, it would be best to wait and make an effort to speak to him, as he might mingle in the crowd and make inquiries for her that would publish the fact that they had planned flight.

HER heart beat wildly as she heard her name spoken. Eaton stood beside her.

"Too bad about Copeland," he remarked in his usual careless fashion, "but one of those policemen promised to see that he goes home."

She was bewildered by his sudden ap-

pearance. Eaton never missed anything: he would certainly make note of her gown and hat as not proper for occasions of highest ceremony. Nor was it likely he had overlooked the two suit-cases strapped to the rear of Billy's car. One never knew how much Eaton saw; but it was never safe to assume that anything escaped him.

"Looked for you all over the church, and had given you up," Eaton was saying. "You can't say no-simply got to have you! Stupid to be pulling off a wedding the night we're dedicating the new swimming pool at the Wright Settlement House. Program all shot to pieces, but Mamie Pembroke's going to sing and you've got to do a recitation. Favor to an old friend! They dumped the full responsibility on me at six o'clock-six, mind you!"

Nan allowed him to pilot her round the corner, wondering how much he knew, and trying to adjust herself to this new situation. A car that she recognized as the Pembrokes' stood at the

curb.

"Oh, come right along, Nan; there's no use in saying you wont," cried Mamie Pembroke.

The Pembrokes were among those who had dropped her after she became identified with the Kinneys, and her rage at Copeland was mitigated by their cordiality.

"Hello, Mamie! What on earth do you want with me?"

"Oh, it's a lark-one of this crazy Eaton man's ideas."

Nan knew that she had been recognized by many people and that even if Copeland had not made a fool of himself the elopement was out of the question. She felt giddy and leaned heavily on Eaton's arm as he helped her into the

"You were alone, weren't you, Nan?" Eaton asked as the machine started.

"Yes," she faltered, settling back into a seat beside Mrs. Pembroke.

"Then we'd better stop at your house and tell 'em where vou've gone."

As she had not meant to return at all, it seemed absurd to go back now to say that she was going to a settlement-house entertainment and would be home in an hour or so. The telltale letter could hardly have been found yet; but on Eaton's insistence the car whirled round to the Farley's, and Nan let herself in with her key.

Farley was awake, reading a magazine article on "The Ohio in the Civil War."

"Back already! Getting married doesn't take long, does it!—not as long

as getting out of it!"

"Oh, the wedding was stunning!" she cried breathlessly. "I never saw so much gold braid in my life. I'm going with the Pembrokes and Mr. Eaton down to dedicate a swimming-pool at the Wright Settlement House. I just stopped to tell you so you wouldn't worry."

"Tom Pembroke going down there?" he growled. "I thought that tank was for poor boys. What's Eaton got to do

with it?"

She explained that Eaton was substituting for the president of the Settlement House association, who had been called from town, and that he had asked her to recite something.

"Well, 'The Ol' Swimmin' Hole,' will come in handy. I always like the way

you do that. Run along now!"

She darted into her room and found the letter just as she had left it on the mantel. She tore it into strips and threw them into her beribboned waste-paper basket. Her revulsion of feeling was complete. It was like waking from a nightmare to find herself secure amid familiar surroundings. She returned to Farley's room again and impulsively bent and kissed him.

"Aint you gone yet?" he asked, with the gruffness that often concealed his

pleasure.

"I'm off for sure this time," she called back. "Thanks for suggesting 'The Ol' Swimmin' Hole'—that's just the thing!"

THEY found the hall packed with an impatient crowd. Eaton led the way to the platform and opened the exercises without formality. The superintendent of the house dealt in statistics as to the service rendered by the Settlement. Mamie Pembroke sang "The Rosary" and responded to an encore.

Nan had not faced so large an audience since her appearance as Rosalind

at school. She drew off her gloves before her name was announced, and as she stood up put aside her hat. At least half a dozen races were represented in the auditorium; and she resolved to try first a sketch in which an Irishman, an Italian and a German debated in brisk dialogue the ownership of a monkey. She had heard it done in vaudeville by a comedian of reputation and had mastered it for dinner-table uses. She had added to it, recast and improved it, and she now gave it with all the spirit and nice differentiation of which she was capable. Eaton, who had heard her several times before, was surprised at her success; she had taken pains; and how often Eaton, in thinking of Nan, had wished she would take

There was no ignoring the demand for more, and she gave another comic piece and added "The Ol' Swimmin' Hole" for good measure. She received her applause graciously and sat down wondering at her own happiness. Mrs. Pembroke patted her hand; she heard somebody saying: "Yes, Farley's daughter—adopted her when she was a child!"

Eaton was announcing the close of the program. It was his pleasant office, he said, to deliver the natatorium that had been added to the Settlement House into the keeping of the people of the

neighborhood.

"Many lives go to the making of a city like this. Most of you know little of the men who have built this city, but you profit by their care and labor as much as though you and your fathers had been born here. It is the hope of all of us who come here to meet you and to help you if we can, that you may be builders yourselves, adding to the dignity and honor and prosperity of the community.

"Now, only one man besides myself knows who gave the money for the building of the swimming-pool. The other man is the donor himself. He is one of the old merchants of this city, a man known for his honesty and fair dealing. He told me not to mention his name; and I'm not going to do it. But I think that if some one who is very dear to him—the person who is the dearest of

THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING

all in the world to him—should hand the keys to the superintendent, I should not be telling—and yet, you would understand who this kind friend is."

He crossed the platform and handed

Nan a bunch of keys.

"I'm sure," he said, turning to the interested spectators, "that you will be glad to know that the keys to the bathhouse have come to you through Miss

Farley."

Tears sprang to Nan's eves as she rose and handed the keys to the superintendent amid cheers and applause. She was profoundly moved by the demonstration. They did not know-those simple foreign folk who lifted their faces in gratitude and admiration-that an hour earlier it had been in her heart to commit an act of grossest ingratitude against their benefactor. She turned away with relief that the exercises were over, and followed the rest of the visitors to inspect the house. It was like Farley not to tell anyone of his gift; and she felt like a fraud and a cheat to stand in his place, receiving praise that was intended for him.

On the way home she was very quiet. The many emotions of the day had so wearied her that she had no spirit to project herself into the future. And it seemed futile to attempt to forecast a day's events, when she had, apparently, so little control of her own destiny.

"Hope Mr. Farley wont abuse me for giving him away," Eaton remarked, as he left her at the door. "But the temptation was too strong—couldn't resist it to put you into the picture. Your recitations made a big hit; and those people are real critics!"

She dressed for bed and lay in the window-seat till nearly daybreak, dreaming, staring at the stars.

CHAPTER XVI

AN ABRUPT ENDING

AN sang as she dressed the next morning. The gods had ordained that she shouldn't marry Billy, and after her own uncertainties on that point she was relieved to find that the higher powers

had taken the troublescope business out

Just as she was read, to leave her room the maid brought up a special delivery letter from Copeland. It had been posted at six o'clock. It was evident that the failure of his plans had given him a bad night.

Dear Nan:

Sorry about the row at the church last night. Never occurred to me that there'd be such a jam. I hung around the neighborhood as long as I could, hoping to find you. But it will be nicer after all to make the run by daylight. Telephone me where we can meet this morning, say at ten. I shall be at the office early and shall expect to hear from you by nine-thirty. For God's sake don't fail me, Nan!

This was scrawled in pencil on Hamilton Club paper. She propped it against her dressing-table mirror and stared at it wonderingly. It did not seem possible that she had ever contemplated running away with Billy. The remembrance of him as he sat in his car, quarreling with the police, sickened her.

Either you love me, Nan, or you do not; you either have been fooling me all along or you mean to stand by me now and make me the happiest man alive....

She smiled at Billy's efforts to be pathetic-a quizzical little smile. The paper smelt odiously of tobacco smoke. She tore the note to pieces and let them slip slowly from her hand into her wastebasket. No; she did not love Billy. Only a few hours earlier she had been ready to run away with him; but that was all over now. She was sorry for Billy, but she did not love him. How could she have ever been foolish enough to think she did! But why, she wondered, was she forever yielding to impulses from which a kind fate might not always protect her? "You little fool!" she ejaculated. A moment later she stood smiling in Farley's door.

"Nan, look here what they say about you in the paper!" he said, glancing at her over his spectacles. "I told Eaton not to blab about that swimmin'-tank business and here they've got us all in the

paper I"

"Oh, if only you could have been

there, Papa!"

She saw that he was pleased. He bade her ring for the maid to bring up their breakfast; he wanted to know all about the exercises at the settlement house.

"I guess you made a hit, all right," he said, proudly, after making her read the account aloud. "I never liked your sayin' pieces in public; but I guess if you can tickle a crowd like that I aint

got any right to kick."

The reporter had built his story around her; and had done full justice to her part in the surprise of the evening. Her recitations were praised extravagantly; it was "unfortunate that Miss Farley's elocutionary talents are so rarely displayed in public."

It was compensation for much greater catastrophes than the loss of Billy Cope-

land to find Farley so pleased.

"It's kind o' nice to do things like that—to do things for people," Farley remarked after a prolonged cross-examination. "I'm sorry now I didn't tell you about it. You've got a mighty kind heart, Nan. I used to think I wouldn't make any will, but let what I've got go to you, and leave it to you to help some of these schemes for the poor. You know you've worried me sometimes—we wont talk about that any more; I guess it's all over now."

The questioning look he bent upon her gave her conscience a twinge. If Billy had kept his head in dealing with the police, she would not be listening to Farley's praise!

"Yes, Papa; it's all over," she replied

softly.

When later she called Copeland on the telephone it was to laugh at their misadventure—it seemed safer to make light of it.

"Please forget all about it, Billy. It wasn't my fault or yours either; it was

all wrong anyway. No-"

He was talking from his desk at the store, and as he began to argue she dis-

missed him firmly.

"Please don't be cross, Billy. You ought to be as glad as I am that we didn't do it. Cheer up; that's a nice boy!"

She hung up on his angry reply....

She spent all day at home, virtuously addressing herself to household affairs, much to the surprise of the cook and maid.

MAMIE PEMBROKE stopped to leave a huge bunch of chrysanthemums for Mr. Farley. He sent for her to come up to his room and asked her all about the evening at the Settlement House. Mamie's appearance added to his happiness. He had been deeply grieved when Mamie and the Harrington girls dropped Nan; it was a good sign that they were beginning to evince a renewed interest in her. He attributed the change in their attitude to Nan's abandonment of Copeland and the Kinneys, never dreaming in his innocence of the quiet missionary work Eaton had been doing with the cautious mothers of these young women.

"You better give Nan some work to do on some of your charity schemes, Mamie. She's been shut up here with me so much she hasn't got around with the rest of you girls as I want her to."

"Oh, don't think I do so much! Mamma does it for the whole family. I'm sure Nan does as much as any of the

girls."

"Thanks for your kind words, Mamie; you know perfectly well they dropped me from the Kindergarten board for cutting all the meetings. But I think we all ought to help in these things. It certainly opened my eyes to see that crowd down there last night; I had no idea the settlement had grown so big."

"I wish you and Mamie would go down and look at the Boys' Club some time. They've only got a tumble-down house but they're talkin' of doing something better. A poor boy has a mighty hard time. When I was a boy down on

the Ohio-"

The story was a familiar one to Nan, and as he talked, her thoughts reverted to the will in which his provision for the Boys' Club had so angered her....

All day she marveled at her happiness, her newly wakened unselfishness. In her gratitude for what she sincerely believed to have been a Providential deliverance, she voluntarily gave the nurse the night

Her good cheer had communicated itself to Farley. The nurse was a nuisance, he said, and he was going to be well enough soon to dispense with her altogether. Nan carried up his supper and a tray for herself. The afternoon paper's account of his gift of the swimming-pool revived this as a topic of con-

"I haven't done as much as I ought to for the poor and unlucky. I expect they've called me a pretty hard specimen; and I've turned down lots of these people that's always chasin' round with subscription papers. But I always had an idea I'd like to do something that would count. I'm sorry now I didn't give those Boys' Club folks a boost while I could see the money spent myself. I've tried makin' wills and aint sure about any of 'em. I got a good mind to burn 'em all, Nan, and leave it up to you to give away what you think's right. Only I wouldn't want you to feel bound to do it. These things don't count for much unless you feel in your heart you want to do 'em."

She tried to divert his thoughts to other channels, but he persisted in discussing ways and means of helping the unfortunate. She was surprised at his intimate knowledge of local philanthropic organizations; for a number of them he expressed the greatest contempt, as impractical and calculated to do harm.

"We ought to do those things ourselves, while we're alive. You can't tell what they'll do with your money after you're dead," he kept repeating.

She wondered whether regretted having made the will that had caused her so much anguish. Perhaps-But her resentment had vanished. His solicitude for friendless boys, based upon his own forlorn youth, impressed her deeply. It was out of the same spirit that he had lifted her from povertyshe had even greater cause for gratitude and generosity than he, and she said so in terms that touched him.

"You mustn't think of those things any more, Papa," she said finally. "If you have a bad night Miss Rankin will give me a scolding. I'm going to read you something."
"All right," he acquiesced. "To-mor-

row I'll talk to you some more about my will. It's worried me a whole lot; I want to do the right thing, Nan; I want you to know that.'

"Of course I know that, Papa; I'd be a mighty stupid girl if I didn't; so don't waste your strength arguing with me. You've been talking too much; what shall I read?'

"Don't read me any of this newfangled stuff. Take down 'Huck Finn' and read that chapter about the two crooks Huck meets on the river. You aint read me that lately."

He lay very quiet until she had finished the chapter.

"Much obliged," he said absently. "You run along now. I'll be all right."

IN the hall she met the maid coming to announce a caller.

Jerry, chastely attired in a new fall suit, greeted her with the ambassadorial dignity that he assumed for social occasions, with apologies to J. C. E. He could bow and shake hands like his idol and mentor, though his manner of speech was still his own. The area of collar and cuff that could be sustained on a salary lately raised to eighty dollars a month might provoke smiles; but Jerry was not troubled. By discreetly soliciting custom for a tailor who made a twentyfive-dollar suit which only the most sophisticated sartorial critic could distinguish from a sixty-dollar creation, he got his clothes at a discount. While he had not yet acquired a dress-suit or a silk hat, he boasted a dinner-coat and a cutaway. He had dedicated the latter by wearing it boldly to Christ Church, where he was ushered to the third pew from the chancel and placed beside a lady whose kneelings and risings he imitated sedulously. His mother had been a Campbellite, and a vested clergy and choir, sprung upon him suddenly, had awed him to a mood of humility. After the benediction he took a long walk to think it over.

"I'd been wondering as I came up what I'd do if you were out: I couldn't decide whether to jump in the river or lie down in the middle of the street and be killed by a large, fat auto. Nan,"he held her hand and gazed into her



A smothered "Oh!" greeted him as he reappeared bearing the suit-case.

face with tragic intensity,—"Nan, you have saved my life."

He had never called her Nan before, but she met him promptly on his own ground.

"I should have worn mourning for you, Jerry; you may be sure of that."

"The thought seems to tickle you! But I like you best in blue—that suit you had on the day we paddled up the river still haunts me."

"Oh, that was a last year's bird's nest. I have a lot better clothes than that, but I don't wear them to picnics."

"You'd be dazzling in anything."

He ran on in his usual key for some time, and then rose abruptly and walked toward her. "Are we quite alone?" he whispered

tragically.

"We are," she replied, imitating his tone. "I hope you don't mean to rob the

"No," he replied; "I didn't come to steal; I've brought you a large, beautiful present."

This she assumed to be preliminaries

to a joke of some kind.

"I left it behind that big rose bush in the yard and I'll bring it in,-nobody likely to come in,-no?"

"No; the nurse is out and I just now heard the maid climbing the back stairs

to her room."

A smothered "Oh!" greeted him as he reappeared bearing the suit-case she had entrusted to Copeland's messenger the day before. He placed it quietly by the door, a little shamefacedly in spite of his efforts to pass the matter off lightly. Nan flushed, staring at him defiantly.

"I saw this down at the works and I just thought I'd bring it up. Maybe," he said reflectively, "it aint yours; but I

thought I'd take a chance.'

"N. F." in small letters on the end of the bag advertised its ownership to any observant eye.

"You and I are good friends, I hope,"

she said uneasily.

"Don't be silly, Nan; if we're not, what are we?"

"And if you know about-that-suitcase-"

"I make it my business never to know anything!"

Seeing that her eyes rested nervously on the suit-case, he carried it into the hall out of range of any chance caller's

"Thank you," she said absently as he came back and began speaking volubly of the delights of "Ivanhoe," which Eaton had lately given him to read.

"How many people know about -

that?" she demanded.

"The bag? Not a soul; I told you not to worry about that. I found it behind the door in his private office. Purely accidental-honest it was! He wasn't feeling well to-day," he added. "He'd hung round the store all morning looking pretty glum and didn't show up at all this afternoon. I went to the club

and fished him out about six o'clock and took him home in a taxi. That's all."

Reduced to terms, Billy had characteristically celebrated the failure of the elopement by continuing the drunk he had begun the night before. Her good luck had not deserted her if no one but Jerry knew that her suit-case, packed for flight, had stood all day in Copeland's office. Jerry's intuitions were too keen for her to attempt dissimulation. It would be better to confess and assure herself of his secrecy.

"You don't need to worry about that little matter. Nan. Nobody's going to know anything about it. Nobody does

know anything about it-"

"Mr. Eaton?" she suggested faintly. "I haven't seen Cecil for two days. I've told you all there is to tell. I don't know any more and I don't want to know. Now forget it! Only,"-he deliberated a moment and then added brokenly: "-only, for God's sake don't ever try it again!"

T flashed upon her suddenly that the presence of her suit-case in Copeland's office was susceptible of grave misconstruction.

"I'm going to tell you the whole story, Jerry; I think I'll feel happier if I do.' "Well, you don't have to tell me any-

thing; remember that!"

"Maybe not, Jerry. But I feel that having known me away back in the old times, you'll understand better than anybody else."

Thère was an appeal in this that filled his heart nigh to bursting with pride. He was struck with humility that a girl like Nan should confide in him. He had not yet recovered from his surprise that she tolerated him at all.

"Please don't think I was going to do anything wrong, Jerry," she said pleadingly. "We were to have been married last night; it wasn't-it wasn't anything worse!" she faltered.

"Nan!" he gasped; "don't say things like that! I wouldn't think it-I hadn't thought it of him! And you-!"

"Well, you might have thought it," she said, with a despairing note; "but you didn't, because you're my good friend and a gentleman."

He was so astounded by her unsparing self-condemnation that he almost missed this heart-filling praise. She hurried on with the story, tears filling her eyes. It was an undreamed-of thing that he should see his divinity weep. For the first time in his life he felt that he too was capable of tears. But he must restore her equanimity, and before she concluded, he had decided to pass the whole thing off as a joke.

"Forget it, 'Nan! You never really meant to do it, anyhow. If Cecil hadn't turned up, it's a safe bet you'd have weakened before you got into the boss' machine. It was a good joke—on the boss; that's all I see in it. The only sad thing about it is that it put the boss on the blink all day. If he'd been a real sport he wouldn't have let you escape so easy; looks as though he wasn't ex-

actly crazy about it himself!"

"Oh, you think he wasn't!" she flared.
"I thought I'd get a rise out of you with that! Take it from me, if I'd framed up a thing like that, I'd 've pulled up large shade trees and tall buildings, putting it over. But all you got to do is to charge it up to profit and loss. Hereafter you'd better not make any engagements without seeing me," he concluded daringly.

"There may be something in that," she laughed. "I'm glad I told you, Jerry. It helps a lot to tell your troubles to some one—and you don't think much

worse of me?"

"Oh, too much sympathy wouldn't be good for you!" he said, looking at her fixedly. "Your trouble is, Nan, if you will take it from an old friend, that you've had too soft a time. You need a jar or two to make you watch the corners. So do I; so does everybody! When things come easy for me I get nervous. I've got to have something to fight; but I don't mean punching heads—not any more. Cecil says his great aim in life is to teach me to fight with my brains instead of my fists and feet. But it's hard work."

H^E was a comforting person, this Jerry. His philosophy was much sounder than her own. He had done much better with his life than she with hers, and the advantages had been so immensely in her favor! There was no one else in the world, she reflected, to whom she would confide as in him. He was talking of old times on the river, visualizing sharply scenes and incidents that had grown dim in her memory.

THE

"I guess I had my share of fun down there; if I could be a kid again I'd want to be born right down there on the old

Ohio. I remember once-"

A muffled crash in the room above sent her flying into the hall and upstairs.

"Papa!" she called, standing in the doorway of Farley's room and fumbling for the electric button.

As the ceiling lights flooded the room,

she called loudly to Amidon.

Farley lay on the floor in a crumpled heap. The crash that had accompanied his collapse had been due to the overturning of the electric lamp, at which he had caught as he felt himself falling.

Amidon was already on his knees be-

side the prone figure.

Nan snatched the receiver of the telephone from its bracket and called the regular physician; and then remembering another doctor who lived just around the corner, she summoned him also. Amidon lifted Farley and placed him on the bed. While waiting for her numbers she told him where to find a restorative the doctor had provided for emergencies, and before she finished telephoning he had tried vainly to force a spoonful of the liquid between Farley's lips.

"It's no use," said Jerry, placing his hand over the stricken man's heart.

"No! No! It can't be possible!" Nan moaned. "He'd been so well to-day!"

In a few minutes both physicians were in the room. They made a hurried examination, asked a few questions and said there was nothing to be done.

The indomitable spirit of Timothy Farley had escaped from its prison-house; what was mortal of him remained strangely white and still. Nan, kneeling beside the bed, wept softly. Her foster-mother had died after a brief illness, and she had experienced no such shock as now numbed her. She had, after all, been closer to Farley than to his wife. Her foster-mother, with all her gentleness and sweetness, had lacked the posi-

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tive traits that made Timothy Farley an interesting, masterful character.

"There will be things to do," Amidon was saying gently. "Do you mind if I call Mr. Eaton?"

"No; I should like him to come," she replied.

Jerry went below with the physicians and called Eaton on the telephone.

NAN rose and began straightening the room. Farley had evidently drawn on his dressing-gown with a view to remaining up some time, and had walked to the quaint little table that had so long stood near the window. Nan saw now what had escaped her when she rushed into the room. The oblong top of the table had been so turned that it disclosed a compartment back of the trio of

drawers in which Mrs. Farley had kept her sewing articles. Four long envelopes lay on the top; two others had fallen to the floor and lay among the débris of the lamp. At a glance she saw that these were similar to the ones she had seen Farley hiding on several occasions, and the counterpart of the envelope containing the will she had read with so much concern. One of the envelopes was torn twice across, as though he had intended disposing of it finally.

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She gathered them all together and thrust them back into the table—then ran her fingers along the under side of the lid until she found a tiny catch. Noting the position of this, she drew the top into place, satisfied herself that the spring had caught, and rose just as Jerry came back.

And now the real problems of life begin for Nan. Follow her story in the next installment of "The Proof of the Pudding," in the March issue of The Red Book Magazine, on the news-stands February 23rd.

CANATA CONTRACTOR OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPE

The Warden's Chauffeur

HE was an excellent driver—and he should have been, for he had owned some very good cars.

By Frank X. Finnegan

OR the fifth time in a halfhour the Warden glanced at his watch, snapped the case noisily and dropped it back into his pocket.

"They ought to be here any minute now," he observed to Mensing, his deputy.

Mensing, nervously chewing an unlighted cigar, turned from the window that gave him a view of the highroad which ran past the gates of the penitentiary and lost itself in the green hills beside the river.

"There's a car coming now that looks like it might be them—one of those big battleships," he said. "I suppose they'll use Spalding's car." "Yes—and let him drive it if he wants to," the Warden growled. "With the bunch he's got standing behind him, I wouldn't be surprised to see the judge doing the chauffeur act and the district attorney sitting up behind ready to patch a blow-out."

He rose abruptly from his littered desk and crossed the office to stand beside his assistant and watch the approach of the automobile speeding toward the grim pile of stone and steel through a cloud of dust.

"It's going to make it pretty tough on us," Mensing said gloomily. "I can handle bank-robbers and bank-swindlers, but bank-presidents are a little bit out of my class. I was hoping right along that

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engineers and architects.

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Spalding's drag would work at the last minute so they would soak him with a big stiff fine and give him a suspended

sentence for our end of it."

Warden Wallace continued to watch the cloud of dust rolling nearer and nearer to the ornate gateway that marked the beginning of the drive across the penitentiary grounds. He had the style of chin that the physiognomists assure us indicates self-reliance, and the corners of his big mouth drooped down around it, giving him something of the amiable aspect of a bulldog in repose. He removed his cigar from between his teeth -with a hand which, while gnarled and knotty, had not proved too large upon occasion to be inserted in the opening of a ballot-box to good effect-and scattered ashes upon the velvet carpet which the democracy of a sovereign State had

unwittingly paid for.
"I don't see any reason why Spalding's coming here should make it tough for us. We know our little book, all right, don't we?" he retorted. "This fellow's been a big man for years-a bankpresident. He's had the guys that run things in this State eating out of his hand because they could always swing on him for a nice, big chunk for the campaign fund-either party was welcome because one of 'em was sure to win and Spalding played both ends of it. He was strong all the way up the linelegislators, senators, judges-the whole mob. And they tell me the Governor would pardon him in a minute if he was ready to get out of politics-which he isn't by six years. He's got his eye on a house in Dupont Circle and a desk in

the Senate dormitory.

"Spalding balls things up in his bank and skins a few thousand depositors out of everything they had. And he's turned over to us by the court for a couple of years of rest and quiet until things settle down. What are we going to do with that kind of a man? I give you two guesses. He's still J. Stuart Spalding, and he's going to be alive a long time after he gets out of here—and so are you and I, I hope. That's the answer, Ed. And we've got to begin right now, because that's them in that car, all right."

The morose Mensing waited only long enough to see the dust-shrouded touring car turn in at the gateway for the last lap of its journey, before moving toward the door at his liveliest pace.

"Well, I don't want to be on any welcoming committee," he said. "I'm going

to take a drill around."

He paused in the doorway, his hand on the knob.

"All the same, Bill," he threw over his shoulder, "I wish they'd slipped Spalding a fine and kept him where he was. Somehow he's too rich for my blood."

THE deputy sheriffs who had acted as official escorts to the Honorable J. Stuart Spalding, late president of the People's Home Bank, from the city to the penitentiary, stood aside deferentially at the door of the Warden's office to permit their prisoner to enter first. Wallace, waiting near the desk to receive him, saw a tall, well-groomed man approaching middle age, his face close-shaven and marked with the lines that come from quick thinking and lots of it.

"This is the Warden, I suppose," he said, his hand outstretched. "My name is Spalding. You've probably been ex-

pecting me, Warden."

Wallace blinked a bit at the proffered hand and glanced at the deputy sheriffs. It was the first time in his experience that a convict had entered the prison with the cheery manner of one who has just arrived for a business conference and has only a few minutes to remain. But the two officers appeared to see nothing unusual in the situation, and the Warden instinctively grasped the hand of his new prisoner in the spirit in which it was extended. "Safety first" was one of the Warden's cardinal principles.

"Yes, this is Warden Wallace, Mr. Spalding," the foremost of the deputy sheriffs hastened to say, with tardy realization that the social forms were being neglected. "We'll turn you over to

him," he added awkwardly.

"How do you do?" the Warden returned. "If you'll just take a seat there, I'll look over the papers and make out a receipt."

"Promise me that you will try Sanatogen-

AND at last he does promise. He tries Sanatogen, he takes it three times a day. Skeptical at first, his doubts soon vanish, for gradually but surely there is wrought a change which spells better health, a new happiness to himself and those dearest to him.

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the famous novelist, writes:

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The shock to his sensibilities of being receipted for like a parcel of freight was visible to the naked eye as the ex-banker seated himself and glanced around the office. But it was only a transitory phase. Adjusting himself to the situation under every circumstance had helped J. Stuart Spalding to reach the top of the heap—from which a callous jury had just tumbled him so unceremoniously.

"You've got a nice, comfortable place

here," he observed.

Warden Wallace was glancing over the commitment papers perfunctorily. The receipt for his important prisoner was before him, made out in advance, and he attached his signature with a flourish.

"Some people here don't think so," he said, and the new convict laughed. If the Warden was given to pleasantries, he would find his unwilling guest rarely appreciative of repartee.

"Here you are, Malone," Wallace said, handing the receipt to one of the deputies. "Everything is O. K. Give

my best to the boss."

Malone tucked the paper away and approached the prisoner timorously. His silent partner in the background took a step forward.

"Well, good-by, Mr. Spalding. Sorry I can't do any more for you," he said, extending his hand. The bank-wrecker rose hastily and grasped it.

"Oh, that's all right. It's all in a lifetime," he said. "Much obliged:

Good-by, Jergens."

He shook hands with the other officer, and they were reluctantly moving away when a thought came to him.

"By the way, you boys will want a smoke on the way back," he said. "Have one on me. I suppose it's the last one I'll be able to set up for a while, eh?"

He had slipped his thumb and fingers into his vest pocket, and when they came out there was a glimpse of greenbacks. The two deputies became rooted to the

"Those boys were pretty good to me, Warden. No objection to my making them a little present, is there?" Convict Spalding continued.

"That's up to you," Wallace re-

sponded, watching the proceedings with elaborate carelessness. "You're not exactly in here yet, you know. Besides, these fellows aren't on my pay-roll. I have nothing to do with them."

Mr. Malone and Mr. Jergens lost not a moment in taking advantage of this welcome situation. They sidled over to their recent prisoner in a body, and two of his crinkly bills changed hands with a deftness that argued experience on both sides.

"Much obliged, Mr. Spalding," Deputy Sheriff Jergens rumbled from the neighborhood of his belt. "If there's anything we can do for you on

the outside-"

"You know where to reach us," his partner concluded for him, and having carried out the mandate of the court by delivering the said prisoner to the Warden of the State penitentiary, they shuffled out.

LEFT alone, Warden Wallace and his new charge eyed each other appraisingly for a moment. And it was the convict who spoke first.

"Well, what next?" he said briskly.

"The next thing usually is to take you to the receiving-clerk, where you turn over your money and valuables; and then they give you a hair-cut, a bath, a number and a suit of gray clothes. But I guess I can attend to most of it myself," the Warden returned. "I suppose we can take the bath for granted."

"Haven't skipped a day in twenty years," Spalding rejoined. "What's the matter with the style of this hair-cut? It

cost me half a dollar.'

"That'll do. And by the way, you look to me like a pretty sick man," Wallace said. The new convict snorted his

disdain of the suggestion.

"Who? Me? Never felt better in my life!" he declared. "Why, I haven't been sick a day since I had the measles when I was a kid. I take too good care of myself—can't spare the time to get sick."

M:

"Just the same, I think you ought to go into the hospital for a while," Wallace retorted. "That's the best place for you until I decide what I can do with you."



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Convict Spalding stared a moment, and then a slow smile spread over his features.

"Oh, all right, Warden. Whatever you think best," he said. "I suppose the eating is a little better in the hospital, eh?"

Wallace touched a bell for an attendant.

"U-m-m, yes," he replied. "I'll have your dinner sent in from my kitchen tonight. It takes a little while to get used to this stuff."

"A little while? Lord! I don't expect I'll ever get used to it!" Spalding said. "But if I get a half-decent break in the luck, I'll be out of here in a few months' time."

A clerk responded to the electric sum-

"Show Mr. Spalding where the hospital is," the Warden ordered. "Tell Dr. Garford I'll be up there in half an hour or so to talk to him."

When they were gone he returned to his desk and wrote a memorandum for the receiving-clerk downstairs:

J. Stuart Spalding: violation banking laws; temporarily admitted to hospital.

Then he lighted a fresh cigar, crossed his feet on the edge of his desk and leaned back in his chair to do some heavy thinking.

TWO days afterward Mensing stood beside the Warden in the latter's private office, looking down on a gleaming new automobile that had just been delivered, its tires scarcely soiled by the trip from the warehouse.

"Pretty swell boat, eh?" Wallace said, drawing on his gloves.

"It's a dandy! And you've been waiting long enough for one," Mensing returned. "Going to drive it yourself?"

"Me? I'd make a hit driving a car. A horse is more in my line," Wallace said. "Don't you suppose the Warden of this penitentiary is entitled to a chauffeur if I can find one here?"

"Oh, yes. A trusty, eh? Have you picked one out? There ought to be a raft of 'em here, with all the automobile robberies and taxicab get-aways we have these days."

Warden Wallace chuckled as he turned away from the window and walked to the door, buttoning his coat in preparation for his first ride in the new car.

HE

"Yes, but I'm not going to ride around the country with any gun-man for my side-partner," he said. "I'm going to have a real gentleman driving me."

"What do you mean?" Mensing stared as he asked the question, and his chief continued to enjoy the secret while he lighted a cigar in the doorway.

"Well, I should think a bank-president ought to be pretty good company at the steering-wheel," he returned. "That's my choice when it comes to picking a chauffeur."

"What? You don't mean you're going to take a chance with—with Spalding?"

The Warden's square-cut jaw came out truculently.

"How do you figure I'm taking any chance?" he demanded. "I'm the boss here. It's up to me to assign the convicts in this prison to their jobs. Do you suppose for a holy minute I'm going to waste a man like J. Stuart Spalding in the chair-shop or put him to making shoes? That car belongs to this institution just as much as the freight-elevator, and I need a man to run it. I've selected my man. That's all there is to it."

"That's all right, too, Bill. But it struck me it might have been safer to pick somebody who wasn't quite so much in the spotlight," the deputy said. "Spalding's likely to have some newspaper reporter chasing up here to talk to him, and if this chauffeur business gets out—"

"Well? Suppose it gets out?" Wallace growled as he hesitated.

"Why, it might start something; that's all," Mensing urged. "You once break into the newspapers with that, and let 'em find out Spalding has a private room off the hospital-ward and all his meals from your kitchen, and there's likely to be a legislative investigating committee come down on us like a thousand of brick."

"Say, what's the matter with you? Getting a yellow streak? The doctor



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Deputy Warden Mensing elevated his hands and shrugged his shoulders with the gesture of one who ostentatiously

gets out from under.

"You're doing it, Bill. I was just passing my opinion," he replied. "Those depositors in his bank are pretty sore, and they're likely to keep an eye on Spalding as much as they can for a while."

"I'll give 'em all the chance in the world to do that," Wallace retorted. "If any of that bunch of whiners are around here now, they can see Spalding giving my new car a try-out. I'm not covering up anything that I do here."

WALLACE swung out with a scowl on his ill-assorted features, and a few moments later Mensing, still watching from the second-story window, saw his chief striding down the stone steps side by side with J. Stuart Spalding, his

most distinguished prisoner.

The bank-wrecker had not been called upon to don the gray garb of the convict during his brief stay in the prison hospital, and now he was attired in a black suit, over which he had drawn an enveloping dust-coat. Goggles and a peaked cap aided further in disguising him, and his most intimate business associate would have been obliged to look more than once to recognize the shrewd financier who had dominated party councils, placed judges on the bench and retired aspiring State senators to private life when they crossed his plans.

Warden Wallace climbed into the roomy tonneau of his car and settled back among the cushions with a grunt of satisfaction while his convict chauffeur took his place confidently at the wheel, put a hand on the self-starter and look-

ing over his shoulder, asked:

"Where to?"

"Any old place, so long as you get some speed out of her," Wallace returned. "Let 'er rip!"

[JPON that initial trip there followed days and nights in which the Warden tasted to the full the new delights of motoring. Balmy summer mornings saw his big red car and his goggled chauffeur ready for him, and if it did not draw up to the prison entrance again at dusk, Mensing could always expect a telephone message from some alluring haven of rest, perfunctorily inquiring how things were going and advising him that the Warden would return later. In a penitentiary, things usually go on about the same to-day as they did yesterday. To-morrow holds out little hope of important changes.

What changes these days and the advent of the automobile brought about were in Warden Wallace rather than in the grim institution of which he was titular head. Road-houses far from its forbidding walls began to know him as a regular and a generous customer—and one who was democratic enough to share with his chauffeur what libations he poured upon the altar of joy and good fellowship. And in tango palaces and lesser dance-halls out of the urban orbit in which he and his companion would too readily be recognized, he was a wel-

come and familiar figure.

It was when the turning leaves gave the first hint of coming autumn and the motor-tours across the golden countryside brought a dull flush into the leathery cheeks of the Warden that he decided one day to take a chance nearer the city. He had grown reckless with the passage of the weeks and months of immunity from discovery and had come to believe what he had so boastfully flung at Mensing—that he did not fear the white light of publicity that would come upon him were Spalding discovered at the wheel of his machine. A political conference was to be held behind closed doors at the saloon of a county boss in the outskirts of the great, glaring, garish city where J. Stuart Spalding had so long been a power, and to it Wallace was bidden.

"I'm going in the car," he announced to Spalding as they rode toward the prison the evening before the gathering was scheduled. "I don't see where we're taking any particular chance of anymonth for the the eve journe Will day to before

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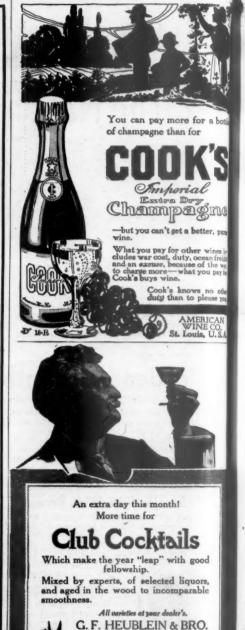
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s of the famous Brand's A-1 Sar NEWYORK HARTFORD LONDON body spotting you; and even if they do, what of it?"

The bank-wrecker, steering the machine with one hand, leaned back against his cushions and knocked the ashes from his cigar.

"Sure," he said lightly. "What of it? I'm not worrying, if you're not. I'd go into Delehanty's place and sit in at the round-up on a dollar bet. That would make 'em open their eyes a little, eh?"

"Better not try that," Wallace growled. "Some loose-mouth would be sure to spill it. We'll just take a run in to-morrow evening, and you can take a jog around town and look at the bright lights if you want to while I'm in with the bunch. You'd better stick to the car, though, don't you think?"

"Just as you say. I don't want to get you into any muss," Spalding said. "But I wouldn't mind startling some of those fellows, at that."

WARDEN WALLACE'S automobile rolled through the quiet streets of Highwood the next evening with that glowering official seated beside his chauffeur. The high collar of Spalding's overcoat concealed most of that part of his face not hidden by fur-fringed goggles, and the few pedestrians who saw the car pass gave not a second glance at its occupants. At Delehanty's place it stopped, and the Warden got down.

"I don't think this thing will last more than an hour or so," he said. "You needn't sit outside here all that while. Take a turn around the town and see what it's like. Some poor boobs have lived here all their lives and still say they like it."

Spalding waited until the side-door had closed upon his jailer, and then with a little chuckle he slowly started the car toward the business center of the little town where the lights were gleaming in the shop-windows and above the moving-picture shows. For the first time since the judge pronounced sentence upon him he was free even from espionage—with a powerful automobile at his command that would carry him far beyond the State boundary before his escape was discovered. But no such wild thought

came to him. His delivery from bondage he had left in the hands of the political ring that he had served so well, and he was assured that it would come about in due time. Now he reveled in the joys of liberty in anticipation, and he laughed at Wallace's warnings.

In the first block beyond Delehanty's saloon he removed his goggles and turned down the enveloping collar of his coat. For a half-mile he drove slowly along the main street until the lights of a particularly garish saloon reminded him that it had been some time since he had experienced the sensation of standing at a bar as a free and untrammeled citizen to order his favorite drink. He stopped the car and did so. There was an odd exhilaration about it that cheered Mr. Spalding unaccountably, and after he had covered a few more squares, turning corners to reach those streets in which the lights seemed brightest and most numerous, he tried it again, with most favorable results to his inner consciousness.

The shadow of the prison, which had always rested upon him in Wallace's presence, even when they were farthest from its gloomy walls, faded away as he stood with his foot on the brass rail, surveying himself complacently in the mirror. And after he had made a third and a fourth stop at widely separated emporiums of joy under the gilt signs and the glaring lights, he became convinced that the automobile was his own and that his solitary excursion would end when he got ready to drive it to his imposing city home.

After a long time he thought of Warden Wallace, waiting for him somewhere back in the distance. He had lingered over the mahogany to chat with an affable bartender, and something was said about politics. That brought to his mind a hazy recollection of the conference at which he had left the Warden, and he solemnly sallied forth in search of his official keeper.

WHEN he was seated once more at the steering-wheel and had started the big car down Main Street, it was suddenly borne in upon Mr. Spalding that he had not the faintest idea where the meeting-place of the political lights was located. He knew it was in the rear room of a saloon, but he had graced with his presence so many of those establishments that they presented to his mind's eye a kaleidoscope of bright lights and flashing mirrors. And when he strove to recall the name of the proprietor of the particular place where the Warden was awaiting him, he discovered that it had slipped out of his hazy memory with the other identifying facts that he needed so badly.

Then the bank-wrecker began to get worried. He had not gone sufficiently far into the twilight state not to realize that failure to find Wallace, before some untoward event occurred that might lead to discovery, was likely to spell trouble for both of them. But accidental discovery of his identity in that hamlet seemed such a remote possibility that on second thought he decided to drive slowly through the more brilliantly lighted streets on the chance that he might pass and recognize the saloon where he had dropped the Warden, or that Wallace, searching for him, might cross his course.

Neither hoped-for event occurred during the next half-hour, and though he turned corners and doubled on his tracks in anxious search for the man or the place that would relieve his growing mental strain, Mr. Spalding slowly began to realize that he was lost. He had no idea where he was or where it would be best to turn in this extraordinary situation. For the first time he longed for the safety of the prison-cell in which he should have been snugly tucked at that hour of the night—the cell that had never really held him an instant.

His brain cleared with the passing of the precious minutes, but the name of the politician for which he racked it still eluded him. And in his desperation he decided to call upon the first likely-looking passer-by for the information he sought. It was a small town—political leaders of sufficient prominence to have their places of business used for secret conferences could not be numerous, and the one he sought would surely be well known. At a corner he stopped the car close to the curb and awaited the coming

of a pedestrian who might lend him aid. Even the paltry disguise of the goggles was laid aside—he sat beneath a street-lamp almost as complacently as he had sat in the courtroom while the evidence was being forged into fetters that the law intended should bind him.

"Excuse me a moment."

He leaned over the edge of the car as a man turned the corner, head bowed on his breast and walking with quick,

nervous steps.

"I wonder if you could help me to find the place I'm looking for," Spalding went on. "I'm afraid I'm lost—wandering around your town here. Do you happen to know a politician who runs a saloon where a political conference might be pulled off? I left a friend there—"

SOMETHING in the face of the man who had stopped beside the car at the first words made the convict pause uncertainly. From surprise and curiosity, the man's expression had changed to amazement as he stared up at Spalding, but it was the malevolent glare following a flash of recognition that made the bank-wrecker stop.

"Spalding!" the man gasped. "By all

the gods! Spalding!"

He tore at the handle of the door in a frenzy, jerked it open and leaping upon the running-board, pulled the startled convict to the pavement and had him by the throat before he could collect his wits enough to attempt resistance. Once on his feet, Spalding clinched and struggled for freedom.

"Here! What's the matter with you?

Let go!"

The words came half-strangled. The other kept his clutch upon him until he felt that he had the mastery. Then he held the banker off at arm's-length and looked at him as though still in disbelief of what he saw.

"What in the devil's name are you doing here?" he demanded. "You've broken out! You've used the money that you gouged out of me and the rest of your dupes to buy your way out of prison! Which is it? Answer me, or I'll choke the life out of your rotten carcass!"

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Nou Ready for Mailing-

New Bulletin of Christmas Suggestions He had taken his hands from Spalding's neck, and that badly jolted financier, after another futile effort to free himself, began to splutter indignant protests: He had a wild hope that he might bluff his way out by clamoring mistaken identity—that something might turn up which would enable him to get back into the car and escape, if only he could gain time.

"What are you talking about? You're a madman!" he declared, tenderly feeling his neck. "You don't know me!"

"Don't I?"

The other man laughed bitterly and flung his victim back against the car, though keeping a hold upon his arms.

"Spalding, I know you better than I know any other man under God's heaven," he said, "and I know where you ought to be at this minute—behind the bars of the penitentiary. Why you're not there I don't know, but I'm going to make it my business to find out and to see that you're put back there. I sat within ten feet of you in court every day of your trial, I've seen you a hundred times. I'm one of the fools who trusted you with their money, and I'd know you in the next world a hundred years from now. You tell me what you're doing here before I have to choke the truth out of you!"

The menacing gesture he made toward Spalding's throat startled the convict

into truth.

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"Don't be a confounded ass," he growled. "I'm driving the Warden's car and I've lost my bearings. That's why I asked you to direct me."

Confident that he was master of the situation, the man released him and stood

glaring down upon him.

"You're driving the Warden's car, are you?" he said. "You're a 'trusty' inside of a month, riding around in an automobile on soft cushions and living on the fat of the land! Instead of breaking rock inside the prison walls, you're mixing up with decent men and trying to pass for one of them.

"Now, let me tell you something, Mr. J. Stuart Spalding: I had nearly three thousand dollars in your bank—money that it took me nearly a lifetime of scrimping and saving to put away. And

you stole it from me and squandered it with the rest on your own rotten schemes. That was the beginning of my troubles. The firm that employed me had its money in your bank, and it went to the wall: I lost my position-I've been practically broke ever since. Do you understand what that means? My family has gone hungry at times in these months while I tramped the streets looking for work-on account of your devilment. My only satisfaction through it all has been the belief that you were getting what was coming to you-that you were under lock and key, living on prison fare. And I find you here—the favorite of your keeper, evidently as free as you ever were."

SPALDING made a move as though to retreat to the automobile. His first shock of fear had passed, and he was in no mood to listen to a lecture from his impulsive antagonist.

"Oh, that part of it's all right," he said testily. "Some one has to run the Warden's car, and as I happened to know how, I'm doing it. See any harm in that? It wouldn't bring your money back to have me breaking stone, would it?"

His backward step was checked by the other man's hand on his arm.

"Wait a minute. I'm not through with you, Mr. Convict," he said. "I've only started. My little girl died yesterday. It may be that would have happened if I had had all the money you stole from me or even all that you stole from everybody. I don't know. But she is dead. And I came up here to Highwood to-night to hunt up a friend of mine and try to borrow money to bury her. That's where I stand—and you did it!"

Mr. J. Stuart Spalding, usually the soul of tact, did a very foolish thing just then. Under less extraordinary circumstances and had he not made so many stops with the motor-car that evening, he probably would not have made such a grievous error. But as the man before him stopped, he thrust his hand into his pocket and drew out a roll of bills.

"I'm sorry you're in such trouble," he

began, "and if this will help you out a little--"

He got no farther. The roar of rage and hatred with which the other leaped upon him, bearing him to the ground, was almost leonine in its volume and menace. It stirred Patrolman Cassidy from his lethargy and brought him on the run from the corner, to find J. Stuart Spalding prostrate behind a big motor-car, with a frenzied man astride him, raining blow after blow upon his unprotected face.

"What's the matter?" he demanded when he had dragged the belligerent off with a mighty effort. "Are you thryin'

to kill the man?"

"He's an escaped convict!" the man

gasped.

The policeman looked down at Mr. Spalding's trig motoring apparel and then at the car.

"More likely you're an escaped lunatic," he said, "but I'll take ye both in and ye can tell the sergeant about it at the station."

He assisted the ex-banker to his feet, and despite protestations herded him to the police station with his assailant. where a gimlet-nosed newspaper ferret happened to be gossiping with the sergeant. And the next morning the world knew all about it, and Warden Wallace was hastily erecting what flimsy walls of defense he could materialize.

WARDEN MENSING, newly appointed by the Governor to succeed the recent Wallace, was sitting at his desk a fortnight later when his secretary tiptoed in.

"Excuse me, Warden, but you haven't made any arrangements yet about your automobile," the young man said. "Did you intend selecting a chauffeur here

or-"

"What? Automobile?"

Mensing wheeled on him with a black brow.

"I don't want any chauffeur, and I don't want any automobile," he yelled. "If there is one here, you notify the Custodian of State Property to come and take it away—or sell it or raffle it off. I wouldn't get into an automobile to go and welcome the President!"

"Yes sir," his secretary said, and he softly tiptoed out again.

A Matter of Business

THE story of a marriage in which sentiment was not to figure.

By Eleanor Mordaunt



VERYONE'S at me about it," said Stedding. Then he added, rather lamely: "I suppose it's the place, don't you

know."

"Yes." Lisbeth's eyes were meditative as she gazed across the wide sweep of lawns and flower-beds, terraces and shrubberies—then traveled farther still to the park, its velvety turf now crossed by long, dark shadows from the beeches which constituted one of the glories of Roehampton. "It's not bad; but there are responsibilities, Tony, and the village is in an awful state; and then the waste in the house—with Ilford and all that poverty just at your very gates."

"Yes, I know. It's all in a rotten state. But there were those three years while I was in South Africa. An affair like that, you know—it wasn't her fault, of course; but it seems to knock a man all to pieces. Then last year while I was shooting in the Rockies, things got left.



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It's such a barn of a place, and one gets

so dead sick of entertaining."

"If it were mine I would cut up some of the farms—build more cottages, start some new industry, use the land, wake up the people—not be content just with entertaining and killing things." There was a fine curl of scorn on Lisbeth's red lips, while her gray eyes were dark with enthusiasm.

"Make this house itself, this barn as you call it,"—and half turning, she gazed with appreciative eyes at the rambling mass of gray stone,—"a center of intellectual life. Show people what a home could be like, how healthy, normal

children-"

"Why not take it on yourself?"

Lisbeth's cheek flushed. She was an advanced young woman who had had many affairs and had broken off one engagement because the man had confessed that he did not believe in divorce. Something in Stedding's tone disquieted her.

"It's no good trying to be in earnest to be natural—with you. You always

start ragging."

"I'm not ragging."

"You are. You're like everybody else—of your type. The things that really matter are the things that you think have only to be passed over by a laugh or—more odious still—a wink...."

"Well, this is in earnest, dead earnest no laughing or winking this time. Look here, Lisbeth. You're awfully sensible and clever and all that—not the sort of woman to take offense when I say that I

don't love you."

"How could it possibly concern me?" Lisbeth straightened herself up from the parapet over which she had been leaning, and half turned. "I believe it's time to go in and dress for dinner. All the

others disappeared ages ago."

"They disappeared because they wanted to give me the chance to do what they all decided long ago I ought to do; and what they thought I particularly wanted to do—with the contrary spirit peculiar to relations—they'd do all in their power to prevent me from doing."

"I can't say that English composition is your strong point, my friend. There

are four do's and one doing in that sentence." And Lisbeth smiled quite kindly, once more her superior, cool, well-balanced self. "Anyhow, I don't see what their expectations have to do with me."

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"Well, I'm going to fulfill them, all the same. Will you marry me, Lisbeth?"

"Why?"

"Well, there's the village, and the house—and the possible children." There was a spice of malice in Stedding's tone. "And for the sake of 'eugenics,' as I believe you call it, if for nothing else, I believe it would be a good move. You're fond of the place; I'd give you everything you wanted, a free hand. We're very good chums, and we wouldn't expect too much of each other. It seems a sane suggestion."

"But again, why?" Lisbeth had turned and now confronted him, standing very upright, with her hands clasped lightly before her. There was more color than usual in her fresh cheeks; her lips trembled, but her eyes beneath their straight black brows were steady.

"Well, the fact of the matter is, I want to be married." Stedding's voice had lost its bantering note, and he spoke with feeling, though his eyes were averted from Lisbeth's, and his sunbrowned face was far more deeply

flushed than hers.

"You're my own sort, my own world: the mater's awfully keen on it. But you're not like the rest of them. I suppose it's going to college and all that: but you have broader views—don't expect things to be all—oh, you know what I mean—couleur de rose—highfaluting."

"Don't expect to be loved, I suppose you mean. You think that college teaches a limitation of expectations, among other things. Certainly it might do worse."

"Well, anyhow, you know all about me—and—and her—no one better. A man does not love as I've loved, twice in a lifetime. Nothing can ever alter that. Hang it all, I can only offer you what I have, Lisbeth. And we were always pals—always will be. But there; you have it plainly. And it wont make any difference to our friendship however your answer goes. I wouldn't have dared; but I knew you were the sort of



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girl one could speak plainly to—wouldn't be huffed."

"No, I'm not huffed."

L ISBETH had turned again and was bent forward, leaning her arms along the stone coping of the parapet which divided the upper from the lower terrace. She was by no means a religious woman, but somehow, as she gazed across the park, with its lengthening shadows, the words came to her: "My lot has fallen to me in a pleasant place; yea, I have a goodly heritage!"

Her last sentence had sounded incomplete. But her silence lasted so long that Stedding grew uneasy.

"I suppose you're furious—think me a beastly cad. But there it is. I absolutely

worship Judith, always have and always shall worship her. She's as much above me as the stars and as unattainable. I don't believe she even knows that I care for her."

"Oh, doesn't she!"

"Well, it's not likely to concern her, one way or another. Even if her husband died, I don't suppose she'd ever look at me. And—well, I want to settle down, have a real home, a pal—some one to take an interest in things. It sounds beastly selfish, I know, but you wouldn't thank me for lies. Are you angry, Lisbeth?"

"No, I'm not angry; I'm thinking. If you'd stop talking for a bit, I might get things clear." And leaning forward with her elbows on the wall, her chin cupped in her hands, she tried to place the problem plainly before her, in an unbiased light. But the mathematical part of her brain seemed to have gone on strike. All she could think of was that she was tall and dark, and that Judith Ormond was "petite" and fair; that she always believed that tall, dark women could "best" little fair ones; that she loved Antony Stedding and would take the risk of attaining not only to what he offered, but to all else besides.

She was no longer the college woman, the ardent suffragette, the clear-minded mathematician and logician. She was a mere, primitive woman, absolutely determined that the man she loved should love her, willing to take the sporting chance to bank all on this. The socialism, the Fabianism, the welfare of the race, individuality, economic independence, with which she had soaked herself through and through — were all clean gone. The hard-riding, sporting instinct of her forefathers was in the ascendant; and her mind was made up.

"Look here, Tony. I'll marry you but on this one condition: that if either of us should ever want to be free, the other should be willing to agree, to grant all possible facilities—to make a divorce easy. If we should see anyone we like better, for instance—"

"Well, you know how I stand, anyhow. It's not likely--"

"Everything's likely except the probable," interrupted Lisbeth; and with this cryptic remark, she turned and walked towards the house, completely ignoring Stedding's rather abortive attempt at an embrace, and only adding this remark: "Don't let's begin by pretending. It's business, not pleasure. As long as we both remember that, we sha'n't expect too much. And let me tell you that half the trouble in the world may be avoided by limiting your expectations, my friend."

THREE months later they were married. For a year Lisbeth played her fish, and during all that time Stedding was never able to gauge his wife's affection for him.

Lisbeth managed his household and entertained his friends, proved herself an invariably good comrade, and at the end of a year presented him with a son. He had all that he bargained for — even more, as he confessed. But for all that he was piqued.

He had wished the whole arrangement to be businesslike, and so it was—"damned businesslike," as he put it to himself. For it was impossible to find fault with Lisbeth in the face of her imperturbable sunniness.

"And now," she said unexpectedly one day some couple of months after the birth of Antony Francis John Stedding, Junior,—at a time while her slight remaining delicacy still gave her an enchanting beauty and softness, a something quite new in the way of charm,—

"your house is in order; it would run itself. The pheasants have done well; the postman comes half an hour earlier and does not linger drinking beer in the kitchen; the cottages are drained; and there is your heir. I think it's time I had a holiday—got away for a change."

"Of course, my dear girl. Where shall

we go?"

"Tony dear, I said a holiday. Besides, the Brents are coming for the first shoot next week, and the Mostyns and Barratts and young Seagrove and Judith and her husband. You couldn't possibly get away."

"Good Lord! You don't expect me

to entertain all these people?"

"But, Tony dear, you asked me to ask

them."

"Well, of course I thought you'd be here. I'll write and put them off. Of course, if you're bent on going away, I'll have to tell them—make the excuse of your health."

"But I told them myself. They know

I wont be here."

"Know it!" Stedding stared, almost open-mouthed, down the long breakfast table at his wife's imperturbable face.

"What in the name of fortune did you

say?"

"I said I had to go away for a restcure,—and indeed it's true, Tony: the post of a modern married woman's no sinecure,—and would they come and keep you company and shoot the pheasants."

"For how long?"

"I suppose a week or two, till you get tired of them."

"I'm not talking of them."

"Oh, I beg your pardon; I didn't realize. Well, I believe a month's the customary thing after a year's service, but I dare say I'll only stay a week or two. I may bring some of my own friends back with me to finish the holiz day. You scarcely know anything of my friends, Tony. They might — interest you." There was a spice of malice in Lisbeth's voice.

"May I ask where you're going?"

"Of course. You must have somewhere to forward my letters. I've taken rooms at the Savoy from to-morrow: there's a lot of people I want to see in

town. Wont you have some more coffee? Oh well, I think I'll go if you'll excuse me. I've got to see the nurse about Baby—arrange that everything shall be in order."

"Your bump of duty is admirably developed. I congratulate you, my dear

Lisbeth."

Stedding's voice held something very like a sneer. But as his wife ran up to the nursery, two steps at a time, and lifting her small, pink-faced son from his cradle, hugged him to her heart, she was laughing, her face flushed, her eyes dancing with triumph.

"He's not a bit pleased; he doesn't like it a bit. Do you hear, sonkins mine? You're a mere embodiment of duty—duty! Really, my beloved, life is really rather a joyous affair, once one sets one's whole heart and soul to the

studying of the game."

THERE was no doubt about it: the house-party dragged. Stedding came to the conclusion that his wife had chosen it badly. But then they were all his friends, and not hers, excepting for Mrs. Barratt, at whose house they had first met each other, nearly three years earlier. And Barratt was inclined to be curious about the absence of the hostess, while Mrs. Barratt wore an air of smiling condescension as though she knew all about it, merely remarking that she was glad to hear Lisbeth was having a little holiday at last—which remark Stedding found hard to bear.

Then he never had cared much for old Mostyn, though he had flirted with his daughter, whose face had grown so long that she looked like a horse. And young Seagrove was an ass; Sir Thomas Ormond was a pompous fool. Of course there was Judith. But Judith was almost too possessive—too fond of "do you remembering" him. Her skin was still exquisitely white; but surely her voice had grown a little metallic; her high heels made an almost intolerable clatter on the parquet floors; while the expressive blue eyes, which had once appeared so angelic, now appeared almost

aggressive.

But the poor thing! No wonder she was getting a little hard. It was the



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one protection of a woman who had committed the irreparable - almost irreparable - blunder of a loveless marriage; and Tom - as she herself confided to Stedding - Tom meant to be kind, but he did not "understand."

"Really, I believe there's something in names," she said. It was in the conservatory, one evening after dinner. "Tom, Thomas, Tommy—they are all equally hopeless. I am a wretch to talk like this: he really means so well. But

with you, Tony dear-"

She was fingering the lapels of his coat and yearning up into his face at this very moment when Mrs. Barratt happened to put her head in at the door and ask if anyone were going to play

bridge that night.

"He was looking rather frightened and a good deal disgusted," she wrote to Lisbeth before breakfast next morning. (As a matter of fact, Stedding's whole thought had been: "Why the devil does she use that beauty scent stuff? And I hope she's not going to kiss me.") "Still, I think you'd better come back," Mrs. Barratt continued the letter. "She's an insidious sort of person.'

Lisbeth started packing; then she changed her mind. "I think I'll take the she wrote, and stayed another week-only sending her maid back for more evening gowns, for there was "plenty doing," as she wrote to her

husband.

By this time Stedding was going in terror of Judith, whose husband had quarreled with young Seabrook for taking his birds, as he declared. The cook had given notice because nobody was ever punctual at any meal.

Then Lisbeth wired: "Coming this afternoon. Bringing three friends.

Such friends, too! There was an ardent suffragette,-who regarded marriage as a legalized slavery and the baby as born to serfdom,-incongruously attired in thick boots and an embroidered princess gown. There was a young man who had written something everyone was talking about and nobody seemed to have read. And there was a Radical member of Parliament, who was undeniably good looking and clever, who believed in holding everything in common, even - as

Stedding half believed - wives! other people's wives! He did not care for shooting, though he could shoot exasperatingly straight, but was immensely interested in rural housing and the wages and conditions of life and labor at Ilford. Indeed, the whole conversation between him and Mrs. Stedding turned on such subjects.

"In 1795, wages were at such and such a rate," he would say.

"And ten years later, at such and such-" Lisbeth would agree. The number of children, the rooms in the cottages, the shillings to be earned a week, the hours devoted to work and to selfdevelopment-they had them all at their fingers' ends-as well as the Danish system of family life and woman's position in Finland. It was "Beth" this and "Gilbert" that, morning, noon and night, and a flirtation with Blue Books in the place of fans, statistics instead of sheep's eyes.

Meanwhile all the party had dispersed except Judith Ormond and her husband, the latter only too evidently remaining

under protest.

There was no use in Stedding's asking his wife to ride or walk with him, even

to go round the garden.

'I'm frightfully busy, really, dear," she would say. "You see Gilbert has given me so many new ideas to work out. But I'm sure Judith would love to go. You always said how well she rode."

"Couldn't you leave that man out of the conversation for once, Lisbeth? I don't think it's particularly good taste for a married woman to be continually harping on a man's Christian name. I don't want to seem narrow or anything of that sort."

"Do I harp on it? It's habit, I suppose-like you and Judith."

"What do you mean?"

"Oh well, you know, Gilbert and I-But there, dear; we understand each other. We've both had-both outlived our grand passions. But there is always a certain tendresse for the past; and the least we can do is to respect each other's feelings."

THEN came the climax. One night Stedding found his wife's door locked. After some knocking, he was sweetly re-



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minded that he had his own room, to which he betook himself in no very amiable frame of mind.

Lisbeth was quite nice about it next morning. "My dear, I never thought you would mind. We agreed, didn't we, that there should be perfect liberty on both sides? And what I feel about it is that now there's Baby and everything settled, we are not so tied. Besides, I'm very sure that what Gilbert says is right."

"What the devil has that bounder got

to do with it?"

"Tony! What have I said to upset you like this? It is merely that he said that everyone knows that it's not good for the race that a woman should have a child oftener than once in every three years—that in the end it doesn't pay."

"Doesn't pay? Good heavens!" Stedding, who had been striding up and down the room, stopped and glanced at Lisbeth, who was placidly doing her hair. "You modern woman! Do you reduce everything to a mere matter of business: love—marriage?"

"Not all marriages." Stedding could only see his wife's face in the glass. One eyebrow was raised, and she was frowning slightly—with the concentrated effort necessary to a straight parting amid her wavy tresses. "Perhaps next time it will be different."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, you see we've been working in the dark so far: we know our own arrangement. What we don't know is the arrangement Judith's made with her husband. But if he's willing to let her go free— Oh, of course you know, Tony dear, that I'll stick to my bargain. I can see you are still drawn to each other, though you are braver and show it less plainly than she does. And Gilbert says—"

"What the deuce does Gilbert say

now?"

"Only that Sir Thomas appears very ductile."

"Oh! And now do you suppose that I want to marry Lady Ormond? or do you want to marry that ass? We'd better have some sort of clear understanding." Stedding was walking up and down the room now, hands deep in his pockets.

"That's what I want. You can't say that I haven't given you every chance of rearranging your life if you feel so inclined. You remember we agreed that if either of us saw anyone we liked better—"

"That means you're in love with that pompous fool, that unspeakable—"

"Really, Tony, I think you're speaking outside your province."

"My province indeed! Have I got a province? I'm beginning to doubt it."

"Why do you talk like that? Of course you've got a province—provinces. Only it's no good beginning to mess them up. There's the province of love and the province of business—oil and water. Here we have, as far as you and I are concerned, a mere matter of business. And as far as Judith Ormond is concerned—"

"Business—love! Do you imagine that fluffy-haired, inane, calculating piece of priggishness attracts me any longer?" blustered Stedding. He caught Lisbeth by both shoulders and glanced at her reflection in the glass. "You know whom I love, as well as I do—you woman, you." And he almost shook her.

"As to setting you free to marry that bounder, or annulling our marriage—haven't you been happy? I defy you to tell me you haven't been happy."

"It was only a business arrangement."
"Then it sha'n't be a business arrangement any longer. Good heavens, woman, don't you know — of course you know that I love you with every bit of me, that I don't know whether I most want to beat you or kiss you when you talk about that infernal business."

With a whirl of muslin and pink ribbons, Lisbeth was on her feet and had turned round upon him, pushing him away from her with both hands, her face very pink, her smile enigmatical.

"Then the basis is-"

"Send them all away, sweetheart." Catching his wife to him with one arm round her neck, Stedding bent back her head, his hand beneath her chin. Then he whispered coaxingly, his lips close to hers: "And let's start on another basis—any old basis. Only for heaven's sake, not business."

THE GRIZZLY

A NEW ANIMAL NOVEL BY JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD

Continued from page 754 of this issue

"A cinnamon!" he growled. "Think of that, Jimmy—he thought there were such a thing as a cinnamon bear! An' when I told him there wasn't, an' that the cinnamon bear you read about is a black or a grizzly of a cinnamon color, he laughed at me—an' there I was born an' brung up among bears! His eyes fair popped when I told him about the color o' bears, an' he thought I was feedin' him rope. I figgered afterward mebby that was why he sent me the books. He wanted to show me he was right.

"Jimmy, there aint anything on earth that's got more colors than a bear! I've seen black bears as white as snow, an' I've seen grizzlies almost as black as a black bear. I've seen cinnamon black bears an' I've seen cinnamon grizzlies, an' I've seen browns an' golds an' almost-yellows of both kinds. They're as different in color as they are in their

natchurs an' way of eatin'.

"I figger most natcherlists go out an' get acquainted with one grizzly, an' then they write up all grizzlies according to that one. That aint fair to the grizzlies, darned if it is! There wasn't one of them books that didn't say the grizzly wasn't the fiercest, man-eatingest cuss alive. He aint-unless you corner 'im. He's as cur'ous as a kid, an' he's goodnatured if you don't bother 'im. Most of 'em are vegetarians-but some of 'em aint. I've seen grizzlies pull down goat an' sheep an' caribou, an' I've seen other grizzlies feed on the same slides with them animals an' never make a move toward them. They're cur'ous, Jimmy. There's lots you can say about 'em without makin' a fool of yourself!"

Bruce beat the ash out of his pipe as an emphasis to his final remark. As he reloaded with fresh tobacco, Langdon

said:

"You can make up your mind this big fellow we are after is a game-killer, Bruce." "You can't tell," replied Bruce. "Size don't always tell. I knew a grizzly once that wasn't much bigger 'n a dog, an' he was a game-killer. Hundreds of animals are winter-killed in these mount'ins every year, and when spring comes, the bears eat the carcasses — but old flesh don't make game-killers. Sometimes it's born in a grizzly to be a killer, an' sometimes he becomes a killer by chance. If he kills once, he'll kill again.

"Once I was on the side of a mount'in an' saw a goat walk straight into the face of a grizzly. The bear wasn't going to make a move, but the goat was so scared it ran plump into the old fellow, and he killed it. He acted mighty surprised for ten minutes afterward, and he sniffed and nosed around the warm carcass for half an hour before he tore it open. That was his first taste of what you might call live game. I didn't kill him, and I'm sure that from that day on he was a big-game hunter."

"I should think size would have something to do with it," argued Langdon. "It seems to me that a bear that eats' flesh would be bigger and stronger than

if he was a vegetarian."

"That's one of the cur'ous things you want to write about," rejoined Bruce, with one of his odd chuckles. "Why is it a bear gets so fat he can hardly walk along in September when he don't feed on much else but berries an' ants an' grubs? Would you get fat on wild currants?

"An' why does he grow so fast during the four or five months he's denned up an' dead to the world without a mouthful to eat or drink?

person mail s Studen

"Why is it that for a month an' sometimes two months the mother gives her cubs milk while she's still what you might call asleep? Her nap aint much more'n two-thirds over when the cubs are born.

"And why aint them cubs bigger'n

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they are? That natcherlist laffed until I thought he'd split when I told him a grizzly bear cub wasn't much bigger'n a house-cat kitten when born!"

"He was one of the few fools who aren't willing to learn — and yet you can't blame him altogether," said Langdon. "Four or five years ago I wouldn't have believed it, Bruce. I couldn't actually believe it until we dug out those cubs up the Athabasca—one weighed eleven ounces and the other nine. You remember?"

"An' they were a week old, Jimmy. An' the mother weighed eight hundred pounds."

For a few moments they both puffed silently on their pipes.

"Almost—inconceivable," said Langdon then. "And yet it's true. And it isn't a freak of Nature, Bruce—it's simply a result of Nature's far-sightedness. If the cubs were as large comparatively as a house-cat's kittens, the mother bear could not sustain them during those weeks when she eats and drinks nothing herself. There seems to be just one flaw in this scheme. An ordinary black bear is only about half as large as a grizzly; yet a black bear cub when born is much larger than a grizzly cub. Now, why the devil that should be—"

Bruce interrupted his friend with a good-natured laugh,

"That's easy—easy, Jimmy!" he ex-claimed. "Do you remember last year when we picked strawberries in the valley an' threw snowballs two hours later up on the mountain? Higher you climb, the colder it gets, don't it? Right nowfirst day of July-you'd half freeze up on some of those peaks! A grizzly dens high, Jimmy, and a black bear dens low. When the snow is four feet deep up where the grizzly dens, the black bear can still feed in the deep valleys and thick timber. He goes to bed mebby a week or two weeks later than the grizzly, an' he gets up in the spring a week or two weeks earlier; he's fatter when he dens up, an' he aint so poor when he comes out—an' so the mother's got more strength to give to her cubs. It looks that way to me."

"You've hit the nail on the head as sure as you're a year old!" cried Lang-

don enthusiastically. "Bruce, I never thought of that!"

"There's a good many things you don't think about until you run across 'em," said the mountaineer. "It's what you said awhile ago—such things are what make hunting a fine sport when you've learned hunting aint always killing—but letting live. One day I lay seven hours on a mountain-top watching a band of sheep at play, an' I had more fun than if I'd killed the whole bunch."

Bruce rose to his feet and stretched himself, an after-supper operation that always preceded his announcement that he was going to turn in.

"Fine day to-morrow," he said, yawning. "Look how white the snow is on the peaks."

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"Bruce—"

"How heavy is this bear we're after?"
"Twelve hundred pounds—mebby a little more. I didn't have the pleasure of lookin' at him so close as you did, Jimmy. If I had, we'd been dryin' his skin now!"

"And he's in his prime?"

"Between eight and twelve years old, I'd say, by the way he went up the slope. An' old bear don't roll so easy."

"You've run across some pretty old bears, Bruce?"

"So old some of 'em needed crutches," said Bruce, unlacing his boots. "I've shot bears so old they'd lost their teeth." "How old?"

"Thirty — thirty-five — mebby forty years. Good night, Jimmy!"

LANGDON was awakened some hours later by a deluge of rain that brought him out of his blankets with a yell to Bruce. They had not put up their tepee, and a moment later he heard Bruce anathematizing their idiocy. The night was as black as a cavern, except when it was broken by lurid flashes of lightning, and the mountains rolled and rumbled with deep thunder. Disentangling himself from his drenched blanket, Langdon stood up. A glare of lightning revealed Bruce sitting in his blankets, his hair dripping down over his long, lean face, and at sight of him Langdon laughed outright.

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"Fine day to-morrow," he taunted, repeating Bruce's words of a few hours before. "Look how white the snow is on the peaks!"

Whatever Bruce said was drowned in a crash of thunder.

Langdon waited for another lightning flash and then dived for the shelter of a thick balsam. Under this he crouched for five or ten minutes; then the rain stopped as suddenly as it had begun. The thunder rolled southward, and the lightning went with it. In the darkness he heard Bruce fumbling somewhere near. Then a match was lighted, and he saw his comrade looking at his watch.

"Pretty near three o'clock," he said. "Nice shower, wasn't it?"

"I rather expected it," replied Lang-"You know, Bruce, don carelessly. whenever the snow on the peaks is so

he be

"Shut up-an' let's get a fire. Good thing we had sense enough to cover our grub with the blankets. Are yo' wet?"

Langdon was wringing the water from his hair. He felt like a drowned rat.

"No. I was under a thick balsam, and prepared for it. When you called my attention to the whiteness of the snow on the peaks, I knew-"

"Forget the snow," growled Bruce, and Langdon could hear him breaking off dry pitch-filled twigs under a spruce.

He went to help him, and five minutes later they had a fire going. The light illumined their faces, and each saw that the other was not unhappy. Bruce was grinning under his sodden hair.

"I was dead asleep when it came," he explained. "An' I thought I'd fallen in a lake. I woke up tryin' to swim."

An early July rain at three o'clock in the morning in the northern British Columbia mountains is not as warm as it might be, and for the greater part of an hour Langdon and Bruce continued to gather fuel and dry their blankets and clothing. It was five o'clock before they had breakfast, and a little after six when they started with their two saddles and single pack up the valley. Bruce had the satisfaction of reminding Langdon that his prediction had come true, for a glorious day followed the thunder-shower.

Under them the meadows were drip-

ping. The valley purred louder with the music of the swollen streamlets. From the mountain-tops a half of last night's snow was gone, and to Langdon the flowers seemed taller, and more beautiful. The air that drifted through the valley was laden with the sweetness and freshness of the morning, and over and through it all the sun shone in a warm and golden sea.

They headed up the creek-bottom, bending over from their saddles to look at every strip of sand they passed, for tracks. They had not gone a quarter of a mile when Bruce gave a sudden exclamation and stopped. He pointed to a round patch of sand in which Thor had left one of his huge footprints. Langdon dismounted and measured it.

"It's he!" he cried, and there was a thrill of excitement in his voice. "Hadn't we better go on without the horses, Bruce?"

The mountaineer shook his head. But before he voiced an opinion, he got down from his horse and scanned the sides of the mountains ahead of them through his long telescope. Langdon used his double-barreled hunting glass. discovered nothing.

"He's still in the creek bottom, and he's probably three or four miles ahead," said Bruce. "We'll ride on a couple o' miles and find a good place for the horses. The grass 'n' bushes will be dry then."

It was easy to follow Thor's course after this, for he had hung close to the creek. Within three or four hundred yards of the great mass of boulders where the grizzly had come upon the tanfaced cub was a small copse of spruce in the heart of a grassy dip, and here the hunters stripped and hobbled their horses. Twenty minutes later they had come up cautiously to the soft carpet of sand where Thor and Muskwa had become acquainted. The heavy rain had obliterated the cub's tiny footprints, but the sand was cut up by the grizzly's tracks. The packer's teeth gleamed as he looked at Langdon.

"He aint very far," he whispered. "Shouldn't wonder if he spent the night pretty close an' he's mooshing on just

ahead of us."

He wet a finger and held it above his head to get the wind. He nodded sig-

"We'd better get up on the slopes," he

THEY made their way around the end of the boulders, holding their guns in readiness, and headed for a small coulee that promised an easy ascent of the first slope. At the mouth of this both paused again. Its bottom was covered with sand, and in this sand were the tracks of another bear. Bruce dropped on his knees.

"It's another grizzly," said Langdon.

"No, it aint; it's a black," said Bruce. "Jimmy, can't I ever knock into yo'r head the difference between a black an' a grizzly track? This is the hind foot, an' the heel is round. If it was a grizzly, it would be pointed. An' it's too broad an' clubby f'r a grizzly, an' the claws are too long f'r the length of the foot. It's a black, as plain as the nose on yo'r face!"

"And going our way," said Langdon. "Come on!"

Two hundred yards up the coulee the bear had climbed out on the slope. Langdon and Bruce followed. In the thick grass and hard shale of the first crest of the slope the tracks were quickly lost, but the hunters were not much interested in these tracks now. From the height at which they were traveling they had a splendid view below them.

Not once did Bruce take his eyes from the creek-bottom. He knew that it was down there they would find the grizzly, and he was interested in nothing else just at present. Langdon, on the other hand, was interested in everything that might be living or moving about them; every mass of rock and thicket of thorn held possibilities for him, and his eyes were questing the higher ridges and the peaks as well as their immediate trail. It was because of this that he saw something which made him suddenly grip his companion's arm and pull him down beside him on the ground.

"Look!" he whispered, stretching out

From his kneeling posture Bruce stared. His eyes fairly popped in amazement. Not more than thirty feet above them was a big rock shaped like a drygoods box, and protruding from behind the farther side of this rock was the rear half of a bear. It was a black bear, its glossy coat shining in the sunlight. For a full half minute Bruce continued to stare. Then he grinned.

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"Asleep-dead asleep! Jimmy-you

want to see some fun?

He put down his gun and drew out his pocket hunting-knife. He chuckled softly as he felt of its keen point.

"If you never saw a bear run, yo'r goin' to see one run now, Jimmy! You

stay here!"

He began crawling slowly and quietly up the slope toward the rock, while Langdon held his breath in anticipation of what was about to happen. Twice Bruce looked back, and he was grinning broadly. There was undoubtedly going to be a very much astonished bear racing for the tops of the Rocky Mountains in another moment or two, and between this thought and the picture of Bruce's long, lank figure snaking its way upward foot by foot, the humor of the situation fell upon Langdon. Finally Bruce reached the rock. The long knife-blade gleamed in the sun; then it shot forward, and a half inch of steel buried itself in the bear's rump. What followed in the next thirty seconds Langdon would never forget. The bear made no movement. Bruce jabbed again. Still there was no movement, and at the second thrust Bruce remained as motionless as the rock against which he was crouching, and his mouth was wide open as he stared down at Langdon.

"Now what the devil do you think of that?" he said, and rose slowly to his feet. "He aint asleep-he's dead!"

Langdon ran up to him, and they went around the end of the rock. Bruce still held the knife in his hand, and there was an odd expression in his face-a look that put troubled furrows between his eyes as he stood for a moment without speaking.

"I never see anything like that before," he said, slowly slipping his knife into his pocket. "It's a she bear, an' she had cubs-pretty young cubs, too, from

the looks of her.'



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MAGAZINE FOR MARCH

The Story-Press Corporation, Publisher, North American Bldg., Chicago

"She was after a whistler, and undermined the rock," added Langdon. "Crushed to death, eh, Bruce?"

Bruce nodded.

"I never see anything like it before," he repeated. "I've wondered why they didn't get killed by diggin' under the rocks—but I never see it. Wonder where the cubs are? Poor little devils, I'll bet they're hungry!"

He was on his knees examining the

dead mother's teats.

"She didn't have more'n two—mebby one," he said, rising. "About three months old."

"And they'll starve?"

"If there was only one, he probably will. The little cuss had so much milk he didn't have to forage for himself. Cubs is a good deal like babies—you can wean 'em early or you can half grow 'em on pap. An' this is what comes of runnin' off an' leavin' your babies alone," moralized Bruce. "If you ever git married, Jimmy, don't you let yo'r wife do it. Sometimes the babies burn up or break their necks!"

AGAIN he turned along the crest of the slope, his eyes once more searching the valley, and Langdon followed a step behind him, wondering what had become of the cub.

And Muskwa, still slumbering on the rock-ledge with Thor, was dreaming of the mother who lay crushed under the rock of the slope, and as he dreamed, he whimpered softly.

Thor and Muskwa encounter Langdon and Bruce in the next installment of "The Grizzly." It will appear in the March issue of The Red Book Magazine, on the news-stands February 23rd.

THE THIRTEENTH COMMANDMENT

A NEW NOVEL BY RUPERT HUGHES

Continued from page 698 of this issue.

This cracked Bayard's pride completely. A sob broke from him, and others followed in ugly, awkward succession. Men do not know how to cry.

Leila heard him from the hall, and the uncouth sound frightened her. She ran to the door and found Bayard on the floor with his arms across his father's knees. He was crying like the baby his failures had made him.

Leila felt hot tears suddenly drenching her cheeks, and Daphne, peering past her, stared through the eyes of anguish at her brother's grief. But what clutched the hearts of the two women was the old shriveled hand of Wesley wavering above the head of his son.

The women marveled over the men till they saw that Bayard was regaining his self-control, and they retreated to spare him the final degradation of knowing they had seen him. Leila closed the door softly, but she and Daphne clung together, listening without compunction. They heard the miserable business that follows such a breakdown, when the soul that has wept must pick up the scattered shards of self-respect. Bayard choked and sniveled, and laughed, and blew his nose, and called himself a good-fornothing cry-baby.

Wesley told him he was no such thing; he was a fine boy and he'd own New York yet; he'd worked hard and he was young, and if he was in trouble, it was only what packs of millionaires were in. He mustn't worry. Everything would come out all right. And if the home had to go, after all it wouldn't matter, because it was only an old ramshackle thing and much too big for two old folks with no children round the place to fill up the empty rooms. It was a lot of bother for Mother, and she'd be a heap comfortabler in a smaller place-one of those nice, cozy flats they were building so fast in Cleveland.

Bayard would not be comforted by

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any such abnegation. He kept groaning:
"To lose your home! To think of you losing your home! And me standing

by !"

"It's nothing, my son. After all, we're not in Belgium. We've got friends, and relations. There's no danger of anything happening to us. I had no right to come over here and worry you about an old house that's no good anyway!"

Daphne clung to Leila and buried her face in Leila's bosom to smother her frenzied grief. Leila, mopping Daphne's cheek with her own handkerchief, caught the glint of a diamond on her finger. It glistened like a great immortal tear.

It inspired her with a new hope. She had often consoled herself with the thought of her jewels as a final refuge, but she had put off the evil day. Now she felt that the time had come.

She threw open the door and spoke into the gloom with a voice of seraphic

beauty:

"I couldn't help hearing what you were saying. You needn't be downhearted, though, for I've, just thought of a way to help Daddy out." He was "Daddy" to her also.

Bayard and Wesley turned and stared at her in amazement. Leila went on in a

kind of ecstasy.

"My rings!" she cried. "Don't you see! My diamonds and rubies! And I've got a necklace or two and some chains and brooches. They're worth a lot of money. And you're welcome to 'em, Daddy."

The men were confused with too many emotions to know what to feel, much less what to say. Leila's mission was so divinely meant that it was sacrilege to receive it with reluctance. And yet for Wesley to let this new daughter-in-law pawn her trinkets for him was postgraduate humiliation.

Bayard was proud of Leila for her final extravagance, but the sarcasm of things could not escape him. She, the untamable spendthrift, the model of financial misbehavior, was chosen to play the rôle of saving angel for the dashing young Napoleon and the cautious old

Fabius.

But needs must when the devil drives, and they obeyed Leila's orders. She was for visiting a pawnshop at once, but Bayard balked at letting her go. She laughed at his scruples; some of the best people were regular clients of the pawnshops, she said. That was what jewels were for when they were not being worn; and she was not likely to be going anywhere where her full regalia would be appropriate.

The end of it was that Bayard demanded the melancholy privilege of visiting the pawnshop himself. Leila made a heap of her adornments. Last of all she took from her neck the little plaque he had given her, with its star-dust of diamonds frosting a platinum filigree.

"You'd better take this too," she said.
"We shall need such a lot of money. You ought to get a good deal for this; it's so

exquisite."

And now he blushed because it had not cost him so much as she thought! He had bought it to appease her after their first big quarrel, when she had terrified him by running up bills. He had rebuked her with a jewel. He had run up a bill to get the jewel—the first of his sins of the sort. And now he was ashamed because he had not sinned with more generosity.

He refused to take the plaque. It was bad enough to take the other treasures from her. He felt like an invader robbing a helpless woman of her jewels.

"I couldn't feel any lower, honey," he said, "if I were tearing these earrings out of your ears."

"Well, if I were a Belgian lady and you were looting my home, you'd kiss me,

at least," she laughed.

But he would not smile. He kissed her mournfully and hurried away to the pawnshop. He skulked in and out like a burglar, and he brought away a pack of tickets and a lump of money—eleven hundred dollars. The pawnbroker apologized for lending him less than half the value of the gems; so many people were looking to the pawnbrokers for salvation, he said, that he could not find cash enough for all.

BAYARD went home and turned over to Leila her funds. She passed them along to her father-in-law. Poor Wesley tried again to evade the donation.

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"I don't see why you should do this for me," he complained. And Leila said:

"I'll tell you why, Daddy. The first time you saw me you took me in your arms and loved me and said you were proud of me, and you said, 'Isn't she pretty?' That made an awful hit with me, and I've just been waiting for a chance to get even. If you don't take what you need, I'll jump out of the window"

He saved her life. He peeled off the minimum that would serve as a sop to his creditors and said he would take the afternoon train home.

CHAPTER XLI

APHNE, having been a mere spectator, had resented her uselessness. Her brother had wept and groveled because he could not help his father; but nobody expected a daughter to be a reliance at such a time.

In a panic women were like horses in a fire: something to save, precious baggage, prize cattle, stupid, panicky things,

more trouble than help.

"Women and children first:" that was the ideal of the male hero. Women and children could not vote, because they could not take care of themselves, or fight, or pay their own way, put out fires or put down riots, strangle mad-dogs, tie up drunkards or maniacs, or furnish important money of their own earning in a time of disaster.

That was the man's opinion of woman, and Daphne knew that numberless women held the same opinion of themselves, or acted on it, at least.

There were women who were as brave and as resourceful and as calm as any man, but somehow they did not seem to count. The triumphant women that won approval were the Leilas, the sirens whose strength was their frailty, whose fascination their greed.

Daphne had watched Leila's little scene with as much confusion as the other two Kips. She felt a normal amount of jealousy, of course, as woman to woman, but no more than a healthy amount, for she liked Leila and she was grateful to her for being able to rescue

her father and for being willing to. It was a fine thing for Leila to strip herself of her last splendor in order to help an old father-in-law pay the interest on a mortgage on a house in another town. Daphne gave Leila full meed of applause for that.

THE

BRO

What embittered Daphne was that it had to be Leila and not herself that saved her father, and that Leila had to do the deed by spending things she had not paid for herself—ornaments, gew-

gaws, gifts.

The money Daphne had saved by giving up her trousseau had done no visible good to anybody. The sacrifices she had made had put no money in her bank. Her willingness to toil had not brought her profit or comfort—not even more toil. She had earned nothing—and Leila had earned everything—"if you could call it earning," Daphne pondered darkly, "to get things the way she got those!"

Leila had collected from life perhaps three thousand dollars' worth of jewels and Daphne had collected a fifty-dollar check framed—and that check was in lieu of work. As soon as she remembered that check, she ran up to her room and took it down from the wall, ripped off the back of the frame and removed the check from the mat.

She studied it and thought. "The first money and the last." Then a vigor of determination clenched all her muscles in a kind of lockjaw. She came out of the spasm in a tremor of hysterical faith. She spoke her thought aloud in a fury.

"It sha'n't be the last, it sha'n't, it sha'n't, by golly!" The feebleness of the expletive disgusted her. She tried to be powerful by way of powerful language. Before she knew it, she ripped out a resounding oath that would have pleased the good Queen Bess. "By God, I'll pay my way!—honestly! like a man!"

All her powder exploded in that one detonation. It knocked her over into a chair in horror. The blasphemy seemed to rattle about the little room. Mrs. Chivvis ran down the hall carrying her everlasting sewing and tapped on the door and asked:

"Did you call me, my dear? Are you



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didn't say anything."

That was doubly false. She had said something. In the slang of the hour, she had "said something." She had "said an earful"-also a heartful.

Mrs. Chivvis supposed that what she had heard was some voice from the street, and went back along the hall,

stitching as she walked.

Daphne took the check and ran down to Bayard's apartment. Bayard was on his way to the pawnbrokers. Leila was in her room. Old Wesley sat in a chair facing a wall. He seemed to see through it. Daphne went to him and put the check in his hand, explaining what it

"It's all I ever earned, Daddy, and I

want you to have it."

He looked at it and smiled, and tears fairly shot out of his eyes. He patted her hand between his and said:

"Why, honey, I couldn't take your poor little earnings! not for anything in

this world."

"Please, Daddy; it would make me

ever so happy!"

"But it would kill me! You don't want to do that, do you? You must spend it on yourself. Buy yourself something nice with it."

"I'll buy myself a picture of you."

She told of her longing for a photograph of him, but did not tell him of her need of it as a talisman. He laughed aloud at this incredible way of spending money, till she began suddenly to cry. He had no answer to that argument except yes. Then she began to laugh. They decided to stop at the photographer's on the way to the five-thirty train.

Daphne ran out and cashed the paper at the grocer's, much to the relief of Reben's bookkeeper, whose books had been held up by the framed check.

Daphne asked for the privilege of taking her father to the train, and Bayard was so busy figuring where to put the cash he had on hand that he consented to stop at home.

Daphne went first to the gallery of a photographer whose showcase on Fifth Avenue had displayed some strong and veracious portraits of men. The photographer's prices staggered Daphne and she protested, but he answered dolefully: "I'd give a thousand dollars for one THE

photograph of my father."

That settled it. Daphne gave him the order and he made Wesley as comfortable as one can be at a photographer's, then walked about him, engaging him in conversation and pressing the bulb surreptitiously when he caught Wesley off his guard. He filled many plates with Wesley's expressions and assured Daphne that he had had success. But it would take some days before proofs could be sent.

Daphne hung back to warn him. "Don't you retouch a single wrinkle. I

love every one of 'em!"

Wesley was curious without vanity, to see how he looked, but he had to hurry away to his train.

Daphne went with him as far as the gate. She was stopped there because she had neither a ticket for the train nor a platform pass from the station master.

She hugged her father almost to suffocation and they tried to cheer each other up till the last moment. Then he left her, jostled through the gate awkwardly and awkwardly turned back to wave to her and throw her kisses.

She watched him dwindling down the long platform. He was a mere mannikin when he reached his place and waved to her before he vanished through the magic

door of the train.

She waved to him with her handkerchief, and when he was gone she buried her eyes in it. Her partings with her father had marked epochs in her life. She wondered what destiny would do to her between this now and the next then. She felt forlorn, afraid for his life on the train, afraid for her soul in the perils before it, and so sorry for him and for herself that she boo-hooed a little.

DESTINY did not keep her waiting, for while she was strangling her sobs as best she could, she heard a voice over her shoulder. It said:

"Aha, gel, at last I have you in me

"Mr. Duane!" she gasped as she turned to meet his smile with another. "And where have you been all this long while?"



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"A lot you've cared," he growled. "Did you ever telephone me as you promised you would? No! Were you always out when I telephoned? Yes! Did you let me call on you? You did not! When at last it penetrated my thick hide that you were actually giving me a hint that you didn't want me around and that you had thrown me overboard neck and crop, I grew very proud. I refused to call on you again."

"I'm awfully sor-ry," she said, and her voice broke. Sorry was a dangerous word for her at that moment, and her sobs were beginning again, when he made a vigorous effort to talk them

down.

The crowds in the station were too well preoccupied with their own errands to notice a girl crying; and farewell tears were no luxury to the gatemen.

Duane tried the best he could to help

her. He was saying:

"You don't want to know what happened, so I'll tell you. I went abroad! Yes, went abroad. I was going to renounce a life of virtue and enter Monte Carlo. I'd read so many stories about parents dragging their daughters to Europe to get unwelcome suitors out of their minds, that I thought I'd try it on myself. I dragged myself aboard a steamer and swore I'd forget you. It was hard at first, but it was easier when I landed in Paris. I was having a bully time and just getting so I didn't think of you more than once or twice a week when this idiotic war busted out and chased me home. And now you've broken in on me and begun disturbing the peace again. What do you mean by it?

"And I find you hugging and kissing a beautiful old gentleman. Of course, you'll tell me it was your father, but why should I believe you? You don't tell me the truth. I was on my way up to Stockbridge, but I had to solve this mystery."

Under the shelter of his garrulity she had reconquered herself and she smiled at him and his welcome clownishness. He was the only person she had seen for some time who took life cheerfully, or whose smile was not more tragic than tears.

He went on: "And now I suppose I've got to miss my train and my golf and all that while I take you home in a taxi. You're far too pretty to be running around loose in a mob like this."

She shook her head. "You mustn't miss your train, Mr. Duane, or your golf. I'm used to going about alone, and I've got to get useder to it. I'm going home in the subway. Good-by and thank you."

She put out her hand formally, and he took it. It was like a soft sun-warmed flower in his palm and he clung to it. Its warmth seemed to reach through his blood to his heart, and to make it ache.

"I wont go. You can't put me off again!" he said. "I will take you home!" He turned to call a redcap standing in solemn patience beside two traveling bags and a bristling golf-bag. "Porter, take my things to the parcel-room and bring me the check."

"No," said Daphne, hastily. "I mustn't. You mustn't! Really! I mean it! Good-

by !"

She walked away so rapidly that he could not follow her without unseemly haste. She heard him call sharply: "Porter, never mind the damned parcelroom. Come along to the train."

HER success in escaping him was so complete that she rather regretted it. When she reached the apartment she found Leila almost prostrated from the effects of her altruism, and from the fact that Bayard was in one of his tantrums.

A special delivery letter had just come from Dutilh's shop. It said that Mr. Dutilh was arriving from Paris with his winter models, and since he would have to pay a large sum at the customs house, it was regrettably necessary to beg Mr. Kip to send by return mail, a check for the enclosed bill which was long past due

And now the briefly adjourned laws of finance were reassembled: Leila's short reign was over; her extravagance had again found her out and demanded punishment. The gown she had bought had been worn shabby, danced to shreds in Newport. But the bill was as bright as ever.

Bayard was so fagged with his weeks of discouragement that he was as irascible as a veteran of the gout whose toe has been stepped on. When Daphne



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walked in, he was denouncing Leila in excellent form. He used Daphne as a further club.

"My poor sister sent back the gown she bought! But you — you bought more!"

Daphne realized how much this would endear her to Leila and she took immediate flight. She found the Chivvises in a state of tension. Mr. Chivvis was not usually home before half past six. Daphne felt an omen in the way they looked at her as she entered.

She went to her room in a state of foreboding misery. She had not paid her board for several weeks. She had not mentioned the fact to Mrs. Chivvis, nor Mrs. Chivvis to her, though the non-payment of a board-bill is one of the self-evident truths that landladies usually discuss with freedom.

A few minutes later, Mrs. Chivvis tapped on the door, her thimble making a sharp clack. She brought her sewing with her and sewed as she said: "May I sit down a moment? Thank you." She kept her eyes on the seam as she talked.

"Well, Miss Kip, the war has reached us also at last. Yes, my husband lost his position to-day."

"Oh, how horrible!" Daphne gasped with double sincerity.

"The office was closed unexpectedly by an involuntary petition in bankruptcy. The firm was thrown into receivers' hands. His salary was not paid last week nor this, and—well—we don't want to inconvenience you, but—"

"I understand," said Daphne. "I'll give you what I can."

She took her poor little wealth from her handbag. She had paid ten of the fifty to the photographer as a deposit. She gave Mrs. Chivvis twenty-five dol-

lars, and promised her more.

Mrs. Chivvis was very grateful and went down the hall smiling a little over her seam.

CHAPTER XLII

LAY called that evening and he was exhausted with a day of tramping the town looking for work. He was too weary to talk and he fell asleep twice during

one of Mr. Chivvis' commentaries on the probable effects of the imminent capture of Paris by the Germans. The French Government had already moved to Bordeaux and— But Clay had read it all in a dozen different newspapers, and he passed away.

Daphne was restless. Mr. Chivvis was on her nerves. Clay was not pretty asleep sitting up, with his jaw dropped and his hands flanging down, palms forward, like an ape's. She was enjoying another of the woes of marriage without its privileges.

The Chivvises began to yawn and Mrs. Chivvis finally bade the startled Clay "Good evening." She had been brought up to believe that it was indelicate for a woman to bid a man "Good night!"

Clay, left alone with Daphne, attempted a drowsy caress, but she felt insulted and she snapped at him:

"If you're only walking in your sleep, you'd better walk yourself out of here and go to bed."

His apology was incoherent and she was indignantly curt with him at the door. She went to her room and sat at the window staring at the swarm of watchers before the bulletin boards.

Daphne could not sleep. She wanted to go out into the streets and walk her restlessness away, but nice young girls could not walk the streets at night without being misunderstood.

She had told her brother that she did not have to starve or sin, because she had a father, a brother and a lover to protect her from want. And now her father and her brother and her lover were all in dire predicaments, staggering blindly in a fog of debt.

Suppose that her father's train ran off the track or into another train! A spread rail, a block-signal overlooked, a switch left unlocked, might bring doom upon his train as on so many others. She shivered at the horror of her father's loss. She shivered again at the thought of what it would mean to her.

Suppose the Chivvises turned her out? Why should they feed her for nothing when their own future was endangered?

What could Bayard do for her? or Clay? There was Mr. Duane, of course; but she could not take his money without





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paying him. And in what coin could she pay him? She trembled and the breeze turned glacial. She was not far from having to choose whether she should starve or- She watched the streets with a new and ghastly interest.

She could see, on the brightly lighted pavements, various women plodding up and down at their doleful trade, peddling their cheap trash. For the first time she felt sorry for these venders of imitation love. They were women after all, and perhaps they hated their work as much as she abhorred it.

They seemed to have small success. She watched one of them, vague and small with distance, but manifestly young and slim and melancholy. She spoke to many men of many sorts. None of them lingered. Some of them laughed at her. Some of them ignored her. She seemed to be very tired. Could the times be so hard that even sin had lost its market?

It was possible, then, even for the wicked to starve! She turned away from the window in a sick alarm at life. She undressed wearily and crept into her bed without saying her prayers. What was the use of praying? All Europe was at prayer.

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THE next morning was another day of the same shoddy pattern. She rose unrefreshed with only her fears renewed. She borrowed the Chivvis' newspaper and, skipping the horrid advertisements of foreign barbarity and American dismay, turned to the last pages. The "Situations wanted" columns were eloquently numerous and the "Help Wanted-Female" columns were few; still, she made a list of such places as there were. She wrote letters to all sorts of people who gave newspaper letter-box addresses, and she went out to call on all sorts of people who gave their street numbers.

The doors of the latter were attended by shabby queues like the box-offices at bargain matinées. And the queues were usually dismissed before Daphne was reached. Or if she reached the advertiser, she found that he did not want her, or he had some trick of selling goods to the poor dupes of his fraudulently

worded decoys.

The letters she wrote were not answered at all. She lost her postage as she had lost her carfares. Day after day went by and there was no comfort in existence. Bayard, Leila, Clay, the Chivvises, all cowered under the pall of misery that overcast the earth. seemed as if the end of the world or at least the break-up of its civilization had arrived without warning and without refuge.

CHAPTER XLIII

APHNE had not told Mrs. Chivvis of her financial plight, nor of her father's nor her brother's. She had simply let the days of payment go past one by one. She saw a chillier glitter in Mrs. Chivvis' eye and there was a constraint upon the conversation, but she was not dunned.

Charles Lamb said that the lender was always shy and ashamed before the borrower; but Mrs. Chivvis was an involuntary creditor and Daphne was not a born debtor. She lacked the sustaining power of Leila's conviction that anything chargeable is a legitimate purchase. She was rather craven as a non-payer.

It is hard for two people to be good company when one owes the other money that the other needs. Mrs. Chivvis had surmised that Daphne's interest in the advertising columns, her long absences and her home-returnings in a state of despondent exhaustion, implied a hunt for employment, but while this was commendable it was not negotiable.

Mr. Chivvis was at home most of the time now, sitting about in his old clothes to save the others. He and his wife naturally talked of Daphne. Sometimes she overheard their undertones. Each seemed to urge the other to the attack. Finally, one evening Mrs. Chivvis made so bold as to call on Daphne in her room, and to say, after much improvis-

"I dislike to speak of it, Miss Kip, but-well-er-you see-the fact is-if you-the grocer is sending round in the morning for his last week's bill, and-if it's not inconvenient-"

Daphne felt sick with shame, but she

had to confess: "I can't tell you how sorry I am, but I haven't any."

"Really? That's too bad!" Mrs. Chivvis said. She was hardly sorrier for herself than for Daphne. She tried to brighten them both with hope. "But you expect—no doubt you expect soon to—"

"I've been looking for—for some work to do, but there doesn't seem to be any."

"Oh, I see!" said Mrs. Chivvis, confirmed in her suspicions, and reduced to silence. Daphne went on, after swallowing several cobblestones:

"But, of course, I've no right to be eating your food and staying on here as a guest. And I suppose I'd better give up my room, so that you can take in somebody who can pay."

Mrs. Chivvis was close, but she was not up to an eviction, and she gasped. "Oh, really! — I hardly think — I shouldn't like—pardon me a minute."

She scurried away and Daphne faintly heard her holding parley with her husband. Then Daphne learned how it feels to have the jury out. She suffered horribly till Mrs. Chivvis came back, and said with all the shame of a conscientious business soul committing an unbusiness-like extravagance.

"Mr. Chivvis agrees with me that we couldn't think of turning you out. That wouldn't be Christian, or Congregational—or anything. Of course, we're a little worried, but we had saved something and we sha'n't starve—not just yet. And I guess we can find enough for us all to eat for a while. So Mr. Chivvis says for you not to bother about it, and just make yourself at home."

Her hard voice crackled like an icicle snapping off the eaves in a spring sun; and before either of them quite understood it, the hard eyes of both thawed; tears streamed, and they were in each other's arms.

Daphne was the better weeper of the two. Poor Mrs. Chivvis could not be really lavish even with tears; but she did very well, for her.

Immediately they felt years better acquainted; old friends all of a sudden. They were laughing foolishly when an apologetic knock on the open door introduced Mr. Chivvis, who would no more have crossed the sill than he would have

broken into the temple of Vesta. His name was Chivvis, not Clodius.

The surprised eyes of Daphne threw him into confusion, but he said:

"I've been thinking, Miss Kip, that if you really want to work and aren't too particular what at—maybe I could get you a place at my old office, with the publishing house. They turned me off, but the receivers are trying to keep the business going. They have to have a lot of—er—ladies down there to address circulars and prospectuses and things, and maybe you could get in. Not much pay, but something's always better'n nothing."

"Anything is better than nothing," said Daphne, "and it might be a begin-

ning."

"It might, that's true," Chivvis exclaimed: he warmed as he thought of his secular church, the office. "There's one lady down there began at ten dollars a week—typewriting; now she's secretary to the vice-president of the company and gets eighteen—and only been there four years!"

Daphne wondered how old the lady would be before she earned her fifty thousand a year. But she accepted Mr. Chivvis' offer, and a letter. And the firm accepted her under his auspices.

NOW Daphne was truly a working woman; not a dramatic artist with peculiar hours, but a toiler by the clock. She entered the office of the company at half-past eight, punched her number on the time-register, and set to work addressing large envelopes. She wrote and wrote and wrote and wrote till twelve: at one she took up her pen again, and the afternoon went in an endless reiteration of dip and write, till five-thirty. Then she joined the home-going panic and took the crowded subway to Columbus Circle.

She usually had to stand all the way, for men were more and more generally surrendering their old privileges of chivalry, particularly that of giving up their seats in trains

The homeward ride took what strength remained to Daphne after the day's work, and she reached her nook in a state of regular collapse. Her hunger was the only antidote to her drowsiness.



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NEW JERSEY



She went to bed at a working woman's hour, slept like a scrub-lady, and when seven o'clock came in the morning, she had to tear herself from sleep as from the recapturing arms of an octopus, limb by limb and faculty by faculty.

She was too tired at night to care much whether Clay called or not. Once or twice, when he called, she fell asleep on his shoulder, even while he protested against her degrading herself by such unnecessary drudgery. She did not want to tell him of her father's penury, and she had not the heart to remind him of his own, and she liked to have him dislike to

have her work.

She plodded the treadmill, till at the end of her sixth day, her forty-eighth hour of transcribing names and addresses from the lists to the wrappers, she carried off a cash reward of eight dollars. This was not clear gain. Her street-car fares had totaled sixty cents, her lunches a dollar and a half; she had worn her costumes at the sleeves and damaged them with a few inkspots, and her shoes were taking on a shabby nap.

It was not encouraging. She was exhausting herself and earning less than enough to pay for her room and board with the Chivvises. Her father had insisted on paying it at first, but he had forgotten it in his multitude of worries, and Daphne had assumed the debt.

Still she insisted that the labor was worth while, since it kept her occupied; besides, it was teaching her endurance and routine, and she was studying the stone-walls of life against which the poor and improvident bruise their heads. About her was a little army of women doing the same work, plebeian young women, and pathetic elderly women, and all the betweens. They were shepherded by a kindly ancient man who called them "ladies" and treated them as if they were.

At Daphne's right elbow was a finely carved old ivory who wrote all day like an automaton. She was manifestly a victim of early advantages followed by financial reverses. She spoke rarely, and coughed incessantly, while her little gray, corded, mottled hand everlastingly and exquisitely drew each name as if it were a monarch's engrossed on a State docu-

At Daphne's left elbow was a large fat girl whose pen rolled off large fat letters. She sat behind a large fat bosom which seemed to be in her way. She had to write around it and peer over it. She talked all the time about nothing of importance, laughed and fidgeted and asked questions that would have been impertinent if they had come from anything but a large fat head.

Her name was Maria Pribik. She was a Bohemian of the second generation; but she was dyed in the wool with New Yorkishness. She was an incessant optimist and kept reminding everybody to "cheer up, goils, the woisst might be woisser yet."

She said to Daphne: "You're a lady, aint cha? I can tell. But say, you got a right to get married and knock off woikin'. Still, this aint so woisse, not when you think of some of the homes some them married goils gotta live in, and then them sweat-shops and shoitwaist factories-Gawd, was you ever in one them? Na? Gee, but choor lucky!"

Daphne's luck did not last long. The receivers found that the percentage of inquiries following upon the advertising and circularizing campaigns was hardly paying the postage. People were either too poor to buy books or too busy with the molten history pouring from the caldrons of Europe. Yesterday's paper

was ancient history enough.

The receivers closed down the business abruptly on a Saturday and instructed the poor old shepherd to announce to his flock that there would be no more work at present. It grieved him to spread the evil news. Daphne's heart stopped. Here she was again, learning again the dreadful significance of "Out of a job" -what the theatrical people called "at liberty."

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The old-ivory lady next Daphne simply whispered "Oh dear, oh dear!" and fell to rubbing her hands together.

Miss Pribik exploded: "Oh Gawd, aint it the limit? And it was such a nice cool, clean job, too. Now I gotta go back to Goist."

Still she repeated her war-cry, "Cheer up, goils, the woisst might be woisser yet!" till some of the dejected flock glared at her murderously.



When You Are Late

FER anxious eyes follow the clock—pictures of wrecks—of street accidents—of the thousand and one things that might happen to you—pass through her mind.

It isn't just her "nerves." She knows that one man in seven is killed or hurt in an accident every year and that you may be the next. Consider this: Out of 128,000 claims paid by the Ætna -24,000 were for falls -4,000 for burns and scalds -5,800 for cuts with edged tools or glass -5,000 for crushed fingers - hundreds for tripping over mats or rugs, for splinters in hands or feet, and for crushed toes - 2,500 for injuries that resulted in blood-poisoning.





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you-nor your wife-will worry about the money when the bad time does come. It protects you against both accident and sickness, if you are in a "Preferred" occupation, and under 51 years of age, for an annual premium of \$60. We will pay you \$50 a week for as long as you are totally disabled by a railway, steamship or burning building accident, or \$25 a week if you are disabled by an ordinary accident. And we will pay you \$25 a week, up to 52 weeks, if you are totally disabled by sickness. We will pay hospital charges or for a surgical operation.

If you are killed by accident, we will pay your estate from \$5,000 to \$15,000, depending on whether it was an ordinary accident or railway, steamship or burning

building accident and on the number of years you If you lose two have carried the insurance. will pay limbs or both eyes by accident, we you the same amounts. One-half of these amounts will be paid if you lose one hand, one foot or one eye by accident. addition to weekly payments while you are disabled, between date of accident and time of death or any one of the other losses named.

Send this coupon today while you are well and strong -- and before the accident happens,

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Anna Held, who writes on "Makeup-on the Street and on the Stage," in the February GREEN BOOK MAGAZINE.

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The February GREEN BOOK MAGAZ

On sale at all news-stands.

The Story-Press Corporation, Publisher, North American Bldg., Chicago,

She looked at Daphne and noted her gloom.

"Say, kid, listen here. Whyn't choo come with me? I can land you a job at the Lar de Lucks. Guy name of Goist is the boss and he'll always gimme a job or any lady friend. He's kind of rough, but what's the diff? His money buys just as much as anybody's. We better beat it over there ahead this bunch."

Daphne murmured her hasty thanks and they left at once. Miss Pribik led the way to a huge building full of "Pants Makers," "Nightshirt Makers," "Waist Makers" and publishers of calendars, favors and subscription books. She asked for Mr. Gerst, saw him, beckoned him over and hailed him with bravado:

"Well, Mist' Goist, here I am, back to the mines. This is me friend Kip. I want you should give her a job—and me too."

Daphne faced Mr. Gerst's inspection without visible flinching, though she was uneasy within. Gerst was a large, flambuoyant brute with eyes that seemed less to receive light than to send forth vision. He had an inquisitive and stripping gaze. But Daphne must endure it. After ransacking Daphne with his eyes, he grunted: "You look pretty good to me, kiddo. You can begin Monday."

"Thanks," said Daphne humbly.
"I'm comin' too," said Miss Pribik.

"All right," said Gerst. "It's time you did. We'll take some of that beef off you." And he playfully pinched her arm. She yelped: "Ouch! That hoits. Quit

now! Be a gent'man, can't you?"

Gerst pinched her again for discipline.

Miss Pribik started to speak to him with
vigor, but checked herself and spoke in
her most duchess manner. "Well, it's up
to me to be a lady even if you can't ack
as a gent'man should, you big Swede."

Gerst laughed. Adroitly evading his pincers, Miss Pribik led the way out and Daphne trailed her outside. Miss Pribik said:

"That Goist guy is sure one case. He gets so fresh! Most the goils just hate it. But what can a party do if you need the money and your boss wont behave? Some them slave-drivers is all the time pawin' round, and if a goil don't like it they tell her right where to go. I hate

to be swore at, don't choo? Once in a while a new goil takes a swipe at Goist, but if he gets gay with you, for Gawd's sake don't hit him or nothin'. He'd just as soon hit back as not. I seen him black a goil's eye once for bitin' him in a roughhouse."

Daphne loathed and feared the man already. He stood like a glowering menace in the path ahead of her.

CHAPTER XLIV

ONDAY morning at eight
Daphne reported for work
with the L'Art de Luxe Publishing Society, pronounced by
its own people (who ought to know)

"Lar de Lucks."

This firm was engaged in the peculiarly Anglo-Saxon business of grazing the censorship as closely as possible. It printed everything that it dared to print under the whimsically Puritanic eye of the law. Toward the authorities it turned the white side of a banner of culture, claiming to put in the hands of the people the noblest works of foreign genius and defying any but an impure mind to find impurity in its classic wares. The other side of the banner was purple and informed the customers by every prurient innuendo that the books were published in their entirety without expurgation. Vice has its hypocritical cant no less than religion.

The difficult thing is the interesting thing. There exists in the average mind a passionate longing to see in print the words and ideas that are tiresomely commonplace in thought and speech but exceedingly rare in publication—as if the eye and ear were jealous of each other.

It was the business of the "L'Art de Luxe" company to promise the eye more than the law allowed it to produce. But it succeeded in persuading numbers of curiosity-tormented people to read through the works of many thorough masters like Balzac and De Maupassant. They rarely found exactly what they sought, but they must have scraped off some benefit in their journey. The "Society" had won a large success with a gaudily printed edition of Balzac, "strictly limited to 100 numbered copies of which this is

No. -" They had sold several thousand of this hundred, and the name of "Bawlzac" was revered by the heads of the firm.

It was now issuing a similar edition of De Maupassant to a "carefully selected" list-carefully selected from every available source of names likely to be worn by people moneyed enough to subscribe. This edition was going well in spite of the war, and Bawlzac was being shoved from his throne by "Dee Moppason."

Daphne knew nothing of all this. Her task was once more to address envelopes and make out index cards showing what "literature" had been sent to each prospect with what result. If an "inquiry" did not speedily become an "order" it must receive the first "followup" and the various "hurry-ups" and

finally the extra inducements.

Daphne neither knew nor cared how the names on the lists were come bywhether by purchase from patent medicine or other companies, or by compilation from directories of directors, or college catalogues or howsoever. The names flowed in at her eves and out at her pen as if short-circuited from her mind.

One day, toward the end of her first week, she was startled to find before her a card bearing the legend "Duane, Thomas." His address was given, and the facts that he had bought the threequarter morocco Balzac, the half-leather Fielding and Smollett and the levant Court Memoirs. He had not yet taken the bait for the De Maupassant. He was about to receive the supreme follow-up.

Daphne pondered his card and his taste. The record amused her; yet it pleased her. It was like him to take the soft luxurious bindings. She imagined that his library had deep animal pelts on the floor and fathomless leather fauteuils. He probably already owned De

Maupassant in the original.

She was shaken from her pensive mood by the sudden commotion of al! the women. All eyes had seen the minute and the hour hands in conjunction at XII. Names were left off in the middle; pens fell from poised hands.

It was the custom of the women to bolt from their tables to their lunch boxes or for the elevators, in which some descended to dairy restaurants and some to soda fountains. Some did not eat at all. Daphne had usually patronized a quick-lunch-room, one of the Childs string of immaculate ivory beads.

But to-day she had left home with nothing but her carfare. She would not borrow from the girls, even from the solicitous Miss Pribik. She would not accept a proffered banana or a sandwich. Miss Pribik assumed she was off her feed, and she let it go at that.

Those who brought their food with them ate it greedily and swiftly amid a clatter of gossip and repartee. The women were of a lower class than at Mr. Chivvis' firm, or less controlled. Their language was rough and coarse, and

often appallingly vile.

The day being warm, as soon as the feast was over, the women made for the fire escapes, which were as large as piazzas. On these gridirons they crowded, bandying wits with other girls and with men on other fire-escapes or in the windows of other buildings. Daphne took the air awhile with the rest, but the shouts of the men in other windows and the answers of her companions drove

Daphne found herself alone. She was glad of the quiet and the solitude, while it lasted-which was not long, for Gerst

came back unexpectedly early.

His eye met Daphne's. He started towards her, and then seeing that she glanced away, went on to his desk. He stood there manifestly irresolute a moment. He glanced at Daphne again, at the fire-escapes, at the empty room. Then he went to the first of the tables and with labored carelessness inspected the work of the absentee. He drifted along the aisle toward Daphne, throwing her now and then an interrogative smile that filled her with a fierce anxiety.

She knew his reputation. She had seen his vulgar scuffles with some of the girls, had heard his odious words. She was convinced that he was about to pay her the horrible compliment of his attention.

Her heart began to flutter with fear and wrath. She felt that if he spoke to her she would scream; if he put his hand on her shoulder or her chair she would kill him, with a pair of scissors, or the



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Unless you care for your teeth as they should be cared for, Time takes from them its certain toll. "Acid-Mouth" and decay, unless prevented, work their destructive way.

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We have a free "Acid-Mouth" Test for you. Send for it. Then turn to Pebeco in time.

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knife with which she scraped off blots No, she must not kill him. But she would have to strike him on the mouth

But that meant instant dismissal at the very least. He might smash his fist into her face or her breast or knock her to the floor with the back of his hand. She had seen too much of life recently to cherish longer the pretty myth that the poor are good to the poor. She had seen how shabby women fared with streetcar conductors and subway guards. She had seen her own prestige dwindle as her clothes lost freshness.

But the violence of Gerst's resentment would be a detail. The horror was the

mere thought of his touch.

There was time enough for her mind, racing like a propeller out of water, to ponder the mystery of the sacredness of person. Why should one's flesh creep at the thought of a mere touch? In the jams in the subway she endured the closest proximity of strange men. Yet she felt no offense in the contiguity.

But for this man even to approach her would be a smothering abomination-to be revenged with ferocity. A soul's body is like a nation's flag or its soil. Invasion must be repelled at any cost.

She rose quickly and tried to reach the fire-escape. That was the solution: to

join the crowd.

But Gerst filled the aisle. She sidled past two tables into the next aisle. He laughed and sidled across to the same aisle. She tried to hasten by. He put his arms out and snickered:

"What's the rush, girlie? Nobody hollered 'Fire!' "

"Let me pass, please," she mumbled.

"Aw, wait ta minute, wait ta minute, cancha? I got sump'n nice to say to you. You know you're some squab. You aint like these other hens. There's class to you. You're the classiest little dame's been in this bunch since I been here."

"Thank you," said Daphne, "and now, if you please, I'd like to get by."

"Wait ta minute, wait ta minute. What'd you say if I was to ast you to go to a show ta-night, huh? What'd you say?"

"Thank you. I have another - I couldn't."

"S'mother eye then? Or to a dance, huh ?"

"Thank you, I'm afraid I can't."

"Why not? come on! why not? Aint I got class enough for you?'

'Oh, yes, but-please, let me by." He stared at her, and his hands twitched and his lips. His eyes ran over her face and her bosom as if she were a forbidden text. She was trying to remember what Duane had told her about the way to quell a man. She felt that she must give the theory another chance. It had succeeded before. With great difficulty and in all trepidation she parroted her old formula.

"Mr. Gerst, you don't have to flirt with me. I don't expect it, and I don't

like it, so please let me go."

He stared at her, trying to understand her amazing foreign language. Then he sniffed with amused unbelief, dropped his hands and stood aside.

Daphne could hardly believe her eyes. The charm had worked the third time! She darted forward to get away before the spell was broken. As she passed him -whether he suddenly changed his mind or had only pretended to acquiesce-he enveloped her in his arms.

She almost swooned in the onset of fear and the suffocation of his embrace. Then she fought him, striking, scratching, writhing. He crowded her against the nearest table and tried to reach her lips across her left elbow.

Her outflung right hand struck against an inkwell, recognized it as a weapon of a sort, and clutching it, swept it up and

emptied it into his face.

His satyric leer vanished in a black splash. His hands went to his drenched eyes. Daphne, released, dropped the inkwell and fled to the locker-room while he stamped about, howling like the blinded Cyclops. Daphne did not stay to taunt him, nor to demand her wages. She caught a glimpse of faces at the fire-escape windows, but hugging her hat and coat, she made good her escape.

She knew what she was escaping from,

but not what to.

Mr. Hughes' remarkable novel will be continued in the next—the March—issue of The Red Book Magazine, which will be on the news-stands February 23rd.

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